

## Do you recognize these symbols?

It is a matter of life and death for drivers of automobiles and farm equipment on rural roads.

To the right is a daytime view of an orange and red **SMV** (slow-moving vehicle) emblem. It is to be displayed on farm equipment and all other vehicles designed to travel at speeds of 25 mph or less.



**It is not simply a reflector — it is a warning to slow down**



The emblem's red border is also designed for nighttime visibility (left).

Your car's headlights will reflect off the red border of the SMV emblem at night, and it will appear to be a glowing red triangle floating in the darkness. It is extremely important to **slow down** immediately because reduced lighting makes it difficult to judge how rapidly you are closing in on a slow-moving vehicle, or what the dimensions of the SMV may be.

For more information on road safety, visit the Oregon Department of Transportation Web site at: [www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS](http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TS).

## Tips for farmers

Farmers have a role in rural road safety too. Here are tips to alleviate some hazards when taking wide equipment onto the road:

- ◆ Oregon law requires you to place a slow-moving vehicle reflector on any machine that travels the road slower than 25 mph. Always point the triangle up, keep the SMV emblem clean to maximize reflectivity, and replace the emblem when it fades, normally every 2-3 years.
- ◆ Mark the edges of tractors and machines with reflective tape and reflectors. Consider installing lighting on older machinery to increase visibility.
- ◆ Turn on your lights, but turn off rear spotlights when going onto the road. From a distance they can be mistaken for headlights.
- ◆ Avoid the highway during rush hours, bad weather, and at night.
- ◆ Use pilot cars, one in front and one in back, if you are going a considerable distance. Hang a brightly colored flag out the window of these pilot vehicles.
- ◆ Consider installing mirrors on equipment to enable you to be aware of motorists around you. Be careful where the mirrors are placed.

## Attention!

It is illegal for any resident of Oregon to display the slow-moving vehicle emblem on permanent, stationary objects, such as mail box posts, driveway entrances, and fences.



## Share the road safely

*Slow-Moving Vehicles  
Oregon Administrative Rule:  
735-114-0020*

**Oregon Farm Bureau  
3415 Commercial St SE  
Salem, Oregon 97302  
(503) 399-1701  
[www.oregonfb.org](http://www.oregonfb.org)**

## Farm equipment shares the roads

While driving you may encounter farm equipment. It may be a single vehicle, like a combine, or perhaps a tractor with an implement in tow. Farm equipment may be wider than other vehicles — even wider than one lane of travel. It is designed to travel at speeds of only 15-25 mph.

Sometimes farm vehicles must operate on highways in order to move between farm and field. Just as motorists are entitled to drive their vehicles on public roadways, farmers are legally allowed to operate farm equipment on these same roads.

Caution, courtesy and special attention to the following tips will help ensure the safety of motorists, passengers, and operators of slow-moving equipment.

***If you are driving 55 mph and come upon a tractor that's moving 15 mph, it only takes five seconds to close a gap the length of a football field between you and the tractor.***

Slow Moving Vehicle (SMV) emblems must be visible from at least 500 feet away, but because it may be difficult to judge the speed at which you are closing in on a vehicle, you should slow down immediately.

Think of the slow-moving vehicle emblem as a warning to **slow down**.



## Be patient

A farmer understands that your trip is being delayed, so he or she will pull off of the road at the first available safe location to allow you to pass. Don't assume that the farmer can immediately move aside to let you pass. Road shoulders may be soft, wet or steep, and this can cause a farm vehicle to tip.

***Even if you have to slow down to 20 mph and follow a tractor for two miles, it takes only six minutes of your time, which is approximately the same as waiting for two stoplights.***

## Yield to wide vehicles

Some farm equipment may be wider than the lane of travel. If you approach a piece of wide farm equipment traveling in the opposite direction and you cannot pass safely, **stop**. Then pull off the road to a location that will allow the equipment to pass you.

## Don't assume the farmer knows you're there

Most operators of farm equipment will regularly check to see if there's traffic behind them. However, the driver must spend most of the time looking ahead to keep the equipment safely on the road and watch for oncoming traffic. Also, most farm equipment is very loud. Do not assume that the driver knows where your vehicle is. Before you attempt to pass, sound your car's horn to warn the equipment operator that you are there.

***In 2004, there were 31 crashes in Oregon involving farm equipment, resulting in 17 injuries and 1 death.***

## Pass with caution

If a farmer has pulled off the road to allow you to pass, or if he or she cannot pull off the road and you feel you must pass, do so with caution.

- ◆ Be watchful of vehicles behind you that may also try to pass.
- ◆ If you must enter the oncoming lane of traffic, do not pass unless you can see clearly ahead of both you and the vehicle you will pass.
- ◆ If there are any curves or hills ahead that may block your view or the view of oncoming vehicles, do not pass.
- ◆ Do not pass if you are in a designated "No Passing Zone" or within 100 feet of any intersection, railroad grade crossing, bridge, elevation structure, or tunnel.
- ◆ Do not assume that a farm vehicle that pulls to the right side of the road is going to turn right or is letting you pass. Due to the size of some farm implements, the farmer must execute wide left-hand turns. If you are unsure, check the operator's hand signals and check the left side of the road for gates, driveways or any place a farm vehicle might turn.

***By being aware of farm equipment during your travels on rural roads, you can help make the trip safe for both you and Oregon farmers.***