

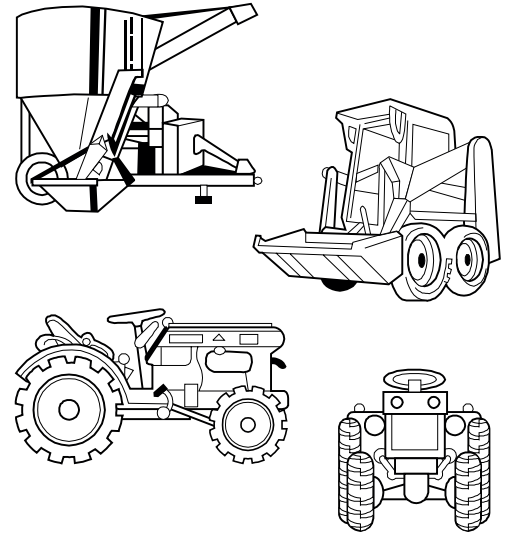
# Reconditioning Flood-Damaged Farm Equipment

Farm machinery and equipment that have been submerged by floodwater requires special attention before it is put back in service. Failure to take proper precautions can lead to extensive damage to the equipment and to possible injury or illness to persons working with or around the equipment. The following outline should help determine the proper action.

## Assess the Situation

Taking prompt action is the key to successfully restoring equipment. The longer you wait to take action, the greater the risk of serious equipment damage. However, never attempt to retrieve equipment from floodwaters if you cannot do so safely. Wait until the water recedes rather than risk injury.

Determine how far the equipment was submerged under water. How much of the machine was under water will determine how extensive the reconditioning work will be. For example, on engine-powered equipment, water depth around the engine area is a critical concern. Likewise, take note of any power trains, axles, or other elements that were submerged. If possible, document the



situation with photographs or take notes for later evaluation.

## Retrieve the Equipment

Move the equipment to a safe location for further cleanup and reconditioning. Do not attempt to retrieve equipment from floodwaters if you can not do so safely. Do not start the engine on any machine if the floodwater may have reached the engine level. Do not attempt to drive a machine if the power train was submerged. Avoid towing equipment for great distances. Transfer equipment on a trailer, if possible. Implements may be hitched to a tractor for transport to the reconditioning area.

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## Exterior Cleaning

Thoroughly wash or clean the exterior of the equipment. It is important to remove as much dirt and debris from the equipment as possible. Dirt clinging to equipment holds moisture and promotes corrosion. If the floodwater was contaminated with waste material, you may want to use a disinfectant to help clean the equipment. Bacteria or other pathogens will not harm equipment but workers may be exposed to harmful bacteria while performing repairs.

## Interior Inspection

You need to look closely inside a piece of equipment for

evidence of floodwater contamination or damage. This may require removing some machine components in order to inspect the interior. You may have to remove shields or panels from the sides of machines in order to expose the components behind them. For engines or transmissions, drain and inspect the fluid or lubricant or look in the fluid and lubricant reservoirs for evidence of water entry. Also check the air intake, engine exhaust, and engine filters. Do not start any engine if you believe water may have gotten inside. Do not run any PTO-powered implements if you believe water has gotten

inside the power train. Carefully document all damage or potential damage for later evaluation.

These guidelines are intended to help minimize equipment damage and personal injury. There are no guarantees that the procedures described here will address all potential problems. If you have any doubts about the reliability or safety of a piece of flood-damaged equipment, get trained professional assistance from your equipment dealer.

