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Everywhere You Go There's Danger

THIS WEEK, Sept. 18-24, has been proclaimed by President Reagan to be National Farm Safety Week. The observance has been sponsored by the National Safety Council and U.S. Department of Agriculture for 40 years and presumably it has helped prevent many accidents.

Farm accidents have been declining but the Safety Council estimates agricultural work-connected accidents were responsible for about 1,800 deaths and 180,000 disabling injuries in 1982.

Normally quiet and peaceful life in the country might lead one to conclude it is a safe way of living but statistically it is ranked behind mining and construction as the third most hazardous occupation. Transportation and public utilities are fourth.

Not only are farm people subject to hazards of having a lot of machinery and livestock around; they also face more direct hazards from dust, chemicals and the weather than city folks do.

Because they can see more weather activity, including tornadoes, rural people worry more about it and also about whether their crops will get too little rain or too much rain.

Finding a safe place off the farm isn't easy, either. Life everywhere is just a perpetual series of hazards to life.

When you get into your car to go to work you might meet a drunken driver or someone else who doesn't drive as carefully as you do and have an accident. Your job hazards may vary from heavy machinery to emotional stress but they are always present.

Sports and recreation may be dangerous, too, even to spectators. Traveling also is risky. You aren't likely to be in a train wreck but you could run into one of the 40 wars going on.

Airlines have a good safety record considering number of passengers transported but you never can tell when a skyjacker may threaten to blow up the plane you're on or unfriendly forces may mistake you

flight for a spy plane and shoot it down.

Just walking down a city street may be hazardous, because a paroled mugger might be trailing you, looking for a chance to slug you and make off with your purse.

During an average 24-hour period in 1982 Oklahoma had one killing, three rapes, 12 robberies, 23 aggravated assaults, 139 burglaries, 233 larcenies and 42 automobile thefts.

Assuming that you make it back home safely, you face other risks. You might trip over a roller skate, fall off a ladder or get an electrical shock. If you live in an apartment a sleepy smoker next door might set the building on fire.

You're not even safe in bed. As one astute observer pointed out years ago, the bedroom is the most hazardous room in the house because more people die in bed than anywhere else.

It's a good thing to consider the risks we take every day because thereby we may be able to avoid most of them.