

## OFF THE CUFF

WEEK of March 10

BY: Ron Kern

Turning the page to March and if we are to believe Punxsutawney Phil winter should be ending in a couple of weeks. If we are to believe the Old Farmers Almanac it will be an early Spring with warmer and dryer weather. If we are to believe my aching joints it's going to be a tough year gardening and mowing.

With two bad knees I thought I'd go as long as I could without surgery. Unfortunately I never thought about the ramifications of that choice until my hip started barking at me. Looks like a hip and two new knees are in my immediate future. Oh well, none of us are getting outta here with original parts anyway.

With warmer weather on the way it won't be long to see tractors rolling in the barren fields. And that means there are things we need to be aware of in agriculture as we begin spring work.

The unfortunate accident that occurred with an accidental release of anhydrous ammonia in Lake County a few years ago, Illinois has brought increased awareness to its safe transport and application.

Please understand your responsibility as a farmer while transporting anhydrous ammonia. If in the event of a release of 18 gallons or 100 pounds of Anhydrous Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>), you MUST make the following 4 phone calls within 15 minutes of the release:

- 911
- Illinois Emergency Management Agency/State Emergency Response Commission 1-800-782-7860
- National Response Center 1-800-424-8802
- Local Emergency Planning Committee Release Reporting (in Ogle County that is Tom Richter at 815-687-2041)

Also when transporting anhydrous ammonia the following regulations must be followed.

- No liquid transfer hose shall be joined between any nurse tank and any toolbar during transport upon a public right-of-way.
- When nurse tanks are pulled in tandem a breakaway coupling device or other means of protection shall be installed at each point where the hose crosses a hitching point. Deployment of equipment designed to achieve this protection shall be installed and maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.
- The hose length from the towed implement mechanically secure point to the breakaway coupler on the towing implements shall have sufficient length to allow breakaway couplers to articulate freely but prevent the hose from contact with the nurse tank



She always says, my lord, that facts are like cows. If you look them in the face hard enough they generally run away.

Dorothy L. Sayers