Silage safety issues for large-scale bunker silos and drive-over piles re-visited: avalanches

R.E. Bolsen, M.E. Uriarte, R.F. Andrade, C.C. Banchero, and K.K. Bolsen
“Few farming operations invite as many different opportunities for injury or fatality as a silage program”.

Murphy, 1994
Silage safety hazards

1. Tractor or truck roll-over
2. Entangled in or run-over by machinery
3. Fall from height
4. Crushed by an avalanche/collapsing silage
5. Nitrogen dioxide
6. Complacency
Silage safety hazards can be...

- Eliminated
- Reduced
- Controlled
Entangled in or run-over by machinery
Fall from height
Crushed by an avalanche/collapsing silage
On January 13, 2014, Jason Edward Leadingham was working alone in an over-filled bunker silo when a massive amount (tons) of corn silage avalanched on top of him. Because he was working alone, no one witnessed the avalanche and no one knew where to start looking for Jason. It took many hours to locate his body under the silage. The Office of the Medical Examiner later determined Jason died of mechanical asphyxia and had no other life threatening injuries. When his body was recovered, a sample bag was found near Jason’s left hip.
The enclosed 17-minute video contains video footage of the recovery efforts and portions of deposition testimony of a Sheriff’s Deputy (first responder), farm owners/managers and employees both past and present. Intermittently, Dr. Keith K. Bolsen, Professor Emeritus at Kansas State University, provides important silage safety rules and guidelines, which save lives.
This video was produced in loving memory of Jason Leadingham, father, husband, son, brother, friend and silage haul-back driver. The family hopes that Jason’s death will encourage others to make silage safety their number one priority. Send your employees home safe to their families every day.

**DVD courtesy of:**

*Dr. Keith K. Bolsen, Professor Emeritus Kansas State University*

*Ruth E. Bolsen, Customer and Technical Support, Silostop*