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Room 308, Main Capitol Building
Harrisburg, PA 17120

CONTACT: Nicole L. C. Bucher
(717) 787-5085

AMUSEMENT RIDE SAFETY OFFICIALS OFFER TIPS TO HELP RIDERS REMAIN SAFE

‘Amusement Ride Safety Week’ is June 1–7

HARRISBURG – Whether seeking thrills on a roller coaster or a gentle spin on a carousel, those enjoying amusement rides can help ensure they remain safe by following some basic safety guidelines, said Deputy Agriculture Secretary Bill Wehry today.

Wehry highlighted the guidelines today during an event at Dorney Park & Wildwater Kingdom in Allentown marking Amusement Ride Safety Week in Pennsylvania.

“Each year, millions of people visit the state’s more than 700 registered amusement operations,” said Wehry. “While trained inspectors work hard to ensure the mechanical safety of amusement rides every day, riders must do their part to ensure they remain out of harm’s way.”

The Department of Agriculture’s Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards registers amusement rides and certifies and trains the state’s 1,500 private industry inspectors.

Wehry offered the following safety tips for parents and children as they visit amusement parks and other operations this summer:

- Look for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania registration plate mounted on the ride and the public notice sign that reports it has been inspected according to the standards set by the Pennsylvania Ride Safety Act.
- Listen carefully to ride operator instructions. Operators are trained to keep riders safe.
- Keep your arms, hands, feet and legs inside the ride at all times. Always stay on the ride until it comes to a complete stop.
- Use shoulder harnesses, seat belts, lap bars or chains appropriately in order to keep children safe.

- Know your child's capabilities and assume an active role in determining whether or not a particular ride is appropriate for the child.
- Watch the ride in operation before you put your child on. Make sure your child can ride it safely.
- Make sure ride operators are alert. Their job is to be aware of the ride operation and of rider actions.
- Ask the operator to stop the ride if you see that your child is crying or shows any other signs of distress.

Pennsylvania is home to more than 7,900 registered amusement rides and attractions that provide thrills and entertainment at the state's community fairs, carnivals and amusement parks – more than an other state or foreign country.

The Department of Agriculture has inspected and registered amusement rides under the Amusement Ride Safety Act since 1984 and regularly participates in education and outreach seminars that include classes and hands-on demonstrations.

For more information about ride safety or the Bureau of Ride and Measurement Standards, or for a full schedule of the amusement ride safety seminar, call 717-787-6772 or visit www.agriculture.state.pa.us and click on "Bureaus."

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Photos of this event can be found by visiting www.agriculture.state.pa.us and clicking on "Online Services," then "Photo Gallery," and "Amusement Ride Safety Week, Dorney Park – June 2, 2009."