

Ontario Encouraging Fire Safety for Barn Owners

Best Management Practices Can Reduce the Risk of Barn Fires

NEWS

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Barn fires can cause a devastating loss of livestock and assets for owners in addition to emotional and economic hardships for families, businesses and communities.

There are best practices to follow to reduce the risk of barn fires:

- Have a qualified professional complete assessments of all farm buildings
- Have all electrical equipment inspected yearly by a licensed electrical contractor, including wiring, mechanical and heating systems
- When heat lamps are required, protect the immediate area with non-combustible sheathing, keep the area around the heat lamp clear of clutter or bedding materials that could catch fire and only use heat lamps with the CSA or ULC label
- Establish good housekeeping practices - eliminate clutter inside and outside the buildings to the risk of fire spreading
- Be sure to check exposed electrical equipment for corroded parts and repair all damaged fixtures or equipment as soon as possible
- Avoid storing dangerous fuels and chemicals such as gasoline, cleaning fluids or solvents inside barns
- Ensure that all applicable regulations are followed when constructing or renovating farm buildings
- Make sure all equipment and motors are in good working condition, and free from dust and debris
- Always keep a fire extinguisher on hand
- Make sure a reliable source of water is available and easily accessible by fire departments.

Ontario encourages owners of farm buildings to follow these best management practices when working with livestock in farm buildings. Planning ahead to reduce risks and prevent accidents will help protect employees, family members and animals.

QUOTES

“The recent barn fires in Ontario are a terrible loss, and my thoughts are with the owners and their communities. My ministry provides a number of resources to encourage farm safety practices to help prevent future tragedies and I would encourage all farmers to consult with their local fire department on fire prevention methods and safety if they have any concerns.”

— Jeff Leal, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

“I am concerned by any loss of life or property resulting from fire, and distressed by the recent animal deaths. These tragic incidents underscore the need for owners and operators to identify - and eliminate - potential fire risks on agricultural properties, including in their barns and stables.”

— Ross Nichols, Fire Marshal and Chief, Emergency Management

QUICK FACTS

- The Ontario Fire Marshal estimates that barn fires represent an average annual cost of more than \$25M in Ontario (2012-2014).
- The [Disposal of Dead Farm Animals Regulation](#) under the [Nutrient Management Act](#) provides deadstock management options for farmers to minimize environmental impacts and biosecurity hazards.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Reducing the Risk of Fire on Your Farm](#)

[Self-Assessment of a Farm Building](#)

[Workplace Safety & Prevention Services: Farm Safety](#)

[OMAFRA: Farm Safety](#)

[Ontario Office of the Fire Marshal](#)

[Agricultural Structures](#)

[Barn Fires – A Concern for Ontario Farmers](#)

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