

Farm fire safety and prevention

Fire prevention and safety begins with you

Farm fires can have devastating impacts. From losses to buildings and valuable machinery to injuries or death of livestock and humans, preventing and preparing for fires can help reduce potential disasters.

Owners of farms, ranches, and agribusinesses should be prepared and plan ahead. Periodically reviewing potential hazards and conditions that could result in a fire and developing a fire safety plan can help reduce the risk of a tragic loss.

Key elements of a Fire Safety Plan

An effective fire safety plan includes two elements—prevention and control.

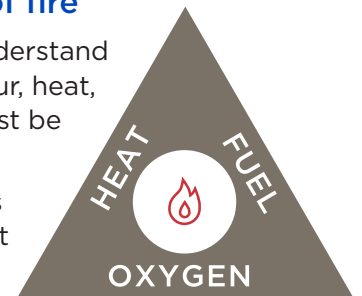
Fire prevention—Understanding how to prevent fires from starting is essential in protecting your farm or agribusiness from fire loss. Keep ignition sources away from flammable fuels or other items that can burn such as piles of hay or straw bedding for animals.

Fire control—Despite your best prevention efforts, fires may start so you should know what to do in the event of a fire to help mitigate the hazards.

Basic elements of fire

It is important to understand that for a fire to occur, heat, fuel, and oxygen must be present together.

If any one of these is missing, a fire cannot start. It is important that steps are taken to avoid the three coming together and thereby reduce the chances of a fire occurring.



Farm fire loss trends¹

- Heating equipment is the leading cause of fires in farm buildings
- Structure fires on farms and ranches are most frequent in late winter and early spring
- Half of barn structure fires damage the entire building

¹National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and Iowa's Center for Agricultural Safety and Health

In the event of a fire

- Do not panic
- Call 911
- If in a building, evacuate everyone immediately and **do not re-enter** the building

Farm and Ranch Safety Checklist: Preventing Building Fires

Having a fire safety plan that helps identify potential hazards and prepare in the event of a fire emergency is crucial to reducing the likelihood of a tragic fire loss. Consider using the following sample checklist to assist and guide you with updating or developing your fire safety plan.

Are flammable and combustible liquids in proper containers? Check for UL label.

Are combustible materials separated from heat sources (hot engines, welding and metal cutting/grinding activities, etc.)?

Are used oily rags in a proper container with a closed lid?

Remember to refuel outdoors and allow the engine to cool.

Practicing good housekeeping? Clean up spills and transport trash away as needed. Yard maintenance should prevent tall grass against buildings.

Engines and other machinery maintained in good condition to prevent overheating, sparking, and backfiring? Check lubrication regularly.

Electrical wiring, outlets and breaker/fuse panels condition checked and repaired as needed?

Is there at least 3 feet of clear space to electrical panels?

Are extension cords rated for their intended use and used for temporary tasks only?

Are appliances not in use unplugged from outlets?

Are fire extinguishers in each building and pressure gauges checked?

Have emergency planning and emergency practice drills been completed?

Does each building have adequate emergency exits with no obstacles?

Is the driveway clear and accessible for fire trucks/emergency vehicles?

Has the local fire department visited for pre-emergency planning?

Are “No Trespassing” and “No Smoking” signs posted as needed?

Are heating systems in good condition and installed per the manufacturer guidelines?

Is propane/natural gas piping between tanks and heating systems in good condition? Vehicle barriers are a good protection measure for tanks and piping.

Are hay bale’s internal temperatures monitored for signs of internal heating and appropriately spaced out for storage?

Are lightning rods and grounding cables in good condition?

Are smoke detectors installed in each building and batteries tested?

Checklist completed by: _____

Date: _____



For assistance with fire safety and prevention contact us at RMSolutions@nationwide.com or 1-800-260-1356.