

Maryland State Firemen's Association

Fire Prevention and Life Safety Committee

TIP Sheet: BARN FIRE SAFETY



PREVENTING BARN FIRES



Prevent – Prepare – Fire can happen anywhere at any time!

Barn fires put civilians, animals and First Responders at risk.

Per year barn fires in the US cause on average:

1 civilian death - 28 million USD in damage - 10 civilians injuries.

Most barn fires are caused by heating and electrical equipment.

Meaning they are Highly Preventable

Preventing Barn Fires

Enforce a no smoking policy in your barn

Regularly clean dust and remove cobwebs (fuel for fire).

Never store Animals and mechanical vehicles (tractors, farming equipment balers) together.

Never leave tractors or vehicles running unattended in the barn.

Store bedding and hay 100 feet from the barn when at all possible.

Store hay in a cool dry place. Check for spontaneous combustion regularly (sooty odor, irritates eyes). Call 911 if suspicious.
Store wet rags in a metal container.

Never use fans, heaters and other devices that are not meant for barn use.

Regularly inspect wiring. Have it installed by a professional and enclosed in metal or PVC.

Prepare for Barn Fires

Make sure all barn users know to call 911 and know the address of the barn.

Ensure that emergency vehicles can reach the barn.
Invite the local fire department out to check. Have your barn address clearly visible from the road.

Create a map of the barn with the location of animals and equipment to give to firefighters. Know how many animals are in the barn at any given time.

Look into installing a sprinkler system if possible.

Know two ways out for animals and people. Animal exits should be 1.5x the width of the largest animal. Make sure there is no more than 75 feet from any point in the barn to an exit.

Install a thermal (not smoke detector) in the barn. Dust particles interfere with a normal alarm. Hook it up to your phone if you live a distance from the barn.

Install a lightning rod.

Keep exits and aisle ways clear.

Develop and practice an escape plan. Keep it posted near exits, in communal areas and practice at least once a month.

Keep extinguishers no more than 30 feet apart. Have a class AB&C extinguisher and make sure everyone is trained to use it.

Keep a halter and lead next to the stall at all times.