

Farm Fire Safety Program Proposal

Fire Department: Perth East Fire Department
Project Name: Building A Farm Fire Safe Community
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DEPARTMENT BACKGROUND

The Perth East Fire Department (PEFD) provides fire suppression, prevention, administration and public education to all or part of the municipalities of Perth East, Perth South (Downie ward) and West Perth (with the West Perth Fire Dept.), serving a combined population of approximately 24,000.

The Perth East Department has three full-time staff (Fire Chief, Fire Prevention Officer, Admin. Assistant) and 68 volunteer firefighters in three stations. Perth East's full-time staff members also administrate the West Perth Fire Department, which boasts a roster of 24 volunteer firefighters in one station.

The communities served by the PEFD are mostly rural/agricultural areas with some small urban centres.

In 2014, the Perth East and West Perth Fire Departments created and launched a very successful Carbon Monoxide Awareness program, which featured "The Wake Up Call" – a full-length video & PSA on the importance of having a CO alarm in the home. ([Click to view videos](#)) The videos have had over 5500 hits in over 35 countries and received a lot of media attention after its launch in November of 2014. Even today, when Carbon Monoxide is in the local news, reporters will refer to the videos.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Since 2010, 71% of dollar loss in our community (over \$8.4 million) was attributed to farm-related fires. To address this, a community-wide farm fire safety program will be launched and implemented. This public education program will include farm-community-specific direct mail campaigns, social media/internet channel blitzes (#FFSC), in-person presentations to farming groups, presence at agricultural events, and the use of local radio and print media and a series of Farm Fire Safety videos.

As part of the intent to reach a target audience, a Farm Fire Safety Plan campaign will also be introduced. Farm owners/operators will be invited to complete a farm safety assessment document and submit it to the fire department, at which point the fire department will work with the owners/operators on a farm fire safety plan that is specific to their farm.

The target audience for the program would include farm property owners, tenants & employees, agricultural associations, groups and communities, and Amish and Mennonite families. Presentations to agricultural groups, associations and farming communities will cover topics such as; identify the main fire hazards around the farm, understand how to address the hazards & prevent fires, and be able to create an escape/evacuation plan.

Farm fire safety resources will be created by the Perth East Fire Department, in cooperation with such agencies as the Canadian Agricultural Safety Association (CASA) and local farm safety associations. Whenever possible, agencies such as NFPA and the Ontario Fire Marshal will also be involved.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

The objective is to create a Farm Fire Safe Community (FFSC). An FFSC would have fewer farm fires and a significant decrease in dollar/livelihood loss. Although fatalities and injuries haven't been a factor in Perth East's farm fire statistics, fewer fires does reduce the risk of those occurring in the future.

The goals for the program are:

- Raise awareness about common farm fire hazards and easy prevention
- Establish strong relationships with the farming community to ensure farms have a fire safety plan
- Reduce the number of farm-related fires by 50% within five years, thus reducing the dollar & livelihood loss

EVALUATION STRATEGY:

OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION PLAN
Raise awareness about farm fire safety	YouTube video hits, articles, media requests, audience numbers, event attendance and other evaluation factors will be used to determine awareness reach.
Create a Farm Fire Safe Community (FFSC)	Track number of participants, target audience exposure, number of farm property owners that request FD assistance with farm fire safety plan. Tracking of number of presentations and audience numbers, event attendees, etc.
Reduce the number of farm fires	OFM and FD statistics, tracking of 2010-2014 stats compared to post-program-launch stats
Reduce the amount of farm fire total dollar loss, per-incident dollar loss and loss of farm-related livelihood	Statistics on farm fire incidents, analyze farm fire incidents to determine if dollar loss per fire is reduced. Analyze stats to determine if farming operation can continue post-fire.
Reduce risk of farm fire injuries and fatalities	Statistics – reduction in farm fires and increase in fire prevention activities reduces risk of injury/death

The first evaluations will be conducted six months and twelve months after program launch.

Once the initial/aggressive program has been implemented for a year, it will transform into a long-term/maintenance format. Annual written reports detailing the program's activities, review of objectives and the results of the evaluation plan will be submitted to the Fire Chief. Analysis of the program's impact will be done in conjunction with the annual report, with program modifications made accordingly.

Video Series Timeline:

- Filming in June of 2015
- Release of videos in September 2015
- Launch event planned for September/October 2015

PROGRAM TIMELINE:

START DATE	April 1st 2015
HARD COPY MATERIALS PRODUCTION	April/May 2015
1 ST DIRECT MAILING CAMPAIGN	May 2015
LAUNCH OF FIRE SAFETY PLAN PROGRAM	May 2015
EVALUATION CHECKPOINT	June 1st 2015
VIDEO SERIES FILMING	June, 2015
ATTENDANCE AT SPECIAL EVENTS	June-July-August-September
VIDEO SERIES COMPLETION	September 15 th 2015
VIDEO SERIES LAUNCH	September/October 2015
VIDEO SERIES CAMPAIGN	12 months starting on launch date
EVALUATION CHECKPOINT	October 1st 2015
FIRE PREVENTION WEEK	October 4-10, 2015
2 ND DIRECT MAIL CAMPAIGN	November/December, 2015
WINTER FARM FIRE SAFETY CAMPAIGN	November 2015 to March 2016
EVALUATION CHECKPOINT	January 1st, 2016
PROMOTION OF FIRE SAFETY PLAN PROGRAM	January 2016 to April 2016
AGENCY NETWORKING SESSIONS FOR NFPA AND OFM ADOPTION OF PROGRAM	January 2016 to April 2016
1-YEAR EVALUATION CHECKPOINT <i>The results of this evaluation will determine the content and timelines for the second and subsequent years of the program</i>	April 1st 2016

BUDGET SUMMARY:

EXPENSES	
Video Production/Editing	\$8000
Staff Time	160-170 hours
Printing (In-house)	\$200
Printing (Professional)	\$500
Mailing	\$3500
FD-Hosted Event (hall rental, refreshments)	\$400
Travel/Mileage	\$1200
TOTAL EXPENSES	160-170 staff hours \$13,800 direct costs

Staffing – the following staff members would be involved with this program:

- Fire Chief
- Fire Prevention Officer
- Administrative Assistant
- Firefighters

CONCLUSION:

The Farm Fire Safe Community Program will raise awareness about the fire hazards specific to farms, easy steps to take to prevent farm-related fires and the importance of having a fire safety and evacuation plan for all areas of a farming operation. As we like to say, “There is more at stake than just the barn.”

Of specific interest to the insurance industry, this program is aiming to reduce farm-related fires. Consequently, reducing these fires will result in the reduction of both the risk of injury/death and staggering dollar loss. Farm fire loss is more than the loss of a building. Livestock, pets, livelihood and peace of mind are often victims of a farm-related fire. Farm-related fires are also a drain on fire department/municipal resources.

This grant would allow our fire department to create materials that could easily be adopted and used by agencies such as the OFMEM, NFPA, safety associations, agricultural associations and the international farming community. In the past, our farm fire safety materials have been adopted by the Ontario Fire Marshal (OFM) and today are still used by departments across the province.

Examples of products and materials we would be creating:

- Safety Tip Sheets
- Direct Mail Cards (4x9 size) (see attachments A and B for sample drafts)
- Brochures and Flyers
- Social Media Messaging
- Graphics and Slogans
- PSAs
- News Releases
- Newspaper/Website Articles
- Video series made available on YouTube and stakeholder websites

We would also be able to provide the following services:

- Fire safety & evacuation plan program
- In-person visits and presentations
- Attendance at special events
- Seminars for agricultural and safety interest groups

The resources developed through this program have the potential to be adopted internationally by agencies and fire departments across North America.