

FARM BUILDINGS IN THE ONTARIO BUILDING CODE



A **Farm Building** means a building or part thereof that contains an agricultural occupancy.

Small Farm Buildings are less than 600m² (6400sqft) and do not contain a G4 occupancy. These buildings are permitted to conform to the National Farm Code of Canada 1995.

Large Farm Buildings are greater than 600m², or more than 3 storeys in height, and contains not more than one person per 40m² of floor area and include any G4 occupancy.

Agricultural occupancy (Group G) means the occupancy of a building or part thereof that is located on land that is associated with and devoted to the practice of farming and is used for the purpose of producing crops, raising farm animals or preparing, marketing, storing or processing agricultural products.

Agricultural Occupancies (Group G):

- G1** High-hazard agricultural occupancies (i.e. containing sufficient quantities of highly combustible and flammable or explosive materials. Feed Mills, Bulk storage of goods, Farm buildings with liquid manure storage below floor)
- G2** Agricultural Occupancies (i.e. Horse Barns, Livestock facilities, Milking Facilities, Fruit and vegetable storage, farm equipment storage)
- G3** Greenhouse agricultural occupancies (i.e. Greenhouses)
- G4** Agricultural occupancies with no human occupants (i.e. Silo vertical and tower, Biomass facilities and Digesters, Grain Bins, Manure Storage)



Large Farm Buildings May Require.....

FLAME SPREAD RATINGS:

- Maximum FSR of 150 for interior wall and ceiling finishes
- Maximum FSR of 25 in Exits

SPRINKLERS:

If it contains a G1 occupancy:

- and is more than 3 stories in building height
- the building area exceeds 4800 m² for a single storey, 2400 m² for a 2 storey or 1600 for a 3 storey
- Single storey barns with below floor manure storage are exempt from requiring sprinklers and the maximum area requirements.
- Single story G1 farm buildings are exempt from sprinklers if they don't exceed 2400 m² in building area

If it contains a G2 occupancy and is more than 3 storeys in building height.

FIRE ALARMS:

If it contains a G1 Occupancy:

- Occupant load exceeding 25

If it contains a G2 Occupancy:

- Occupant load exceeding 150
- More than 1 storey in building height, OR
- Contains a basement used for something other than service equipment

If it contains a G3 Occupancy:

- Occupancy Load exceeding 150
- More than 1 storey in building height, OR
- Contains a basement used for something other than service equipment



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FIRE ACCESS:

- Access for fire department equipment shall be provided for all farm buildings.
- The access is provided by a roadway or yard, and shall take into consideration connection with public roads, weight of firefighting equipment, width of roadways, radius of curves, overhead clearance, location of fire hydrants, location of fire department connections and vehicular parking.

EMERGENCY LIGHTING:

- This applies to all G Occupancies when they are provided with electrical power
- To be provided at all required exits, and
- Principal Routes to the exits
- To be powered by batteries or a generator

FIRE SEPARATIONS:

- All floors and supporting elements in a sprinklered G1 farm building
- All floors and supporting elements in a sprinklered G2 farm building
- Fire Separation requirements between certain major occupancies, including certain G occupancy and another G occupancy

ADDITIONAL EXIT DOORS (REFER TO 2.2.6.2 AND 2.2.6.3):

- Less options for single exits from floor area and buildings
- Changes in measurement calculations on egress/exit door separations
- Clarification what can be considered an Egress Door and an Exit Door
- Door Release hardware clarified – openable by a single hand, one unlatching operation, and no use of tools or keys

NON-GROUP G OCCUPANCIES NOW PERMITTED:

- Group C (dwellings) can be attached to farm buildings using fire separations or firewalls.
- Group D and E (office and mercantile) uses are permitted to be attached or within farm buildings with fire separations.

PART 4 STRUCTURAL REQUIREMENTS:

- Increased snow and wind loads to farm buildings.
- Trusses may need to comply with stricter requirements similar to nonfarm buildings

Note: This is a non-exhaustive list of changes to the Building Code for Farm Buildings. You should always review the requirements in Part 2 of the Ontario Building Code as they relate to Farm Buildings and consult with a qualified designer for specific requirements. You should also reach out to your municipal Building Department and the Authority Having Jurisdiction (AHJ) for any site-specific requirements. This document is not meant as legal or design advice and should not be relied upon as such.