

Town has tips for fire safety on farm

As the summer days get dryer and hotter, fire will become more of an issue in the community.

This holds doubly true for farmland, which have their own host of vulnerabilities to fire.

To address the issue, the Town of Caledon has some fire safety tips so farmers and rural homeowners can keep their properties safe.

The first step suggested by the Town involves planning. Residents can contact Fire and Emergency Services to have them inspect and point out any features of their property that are vulnerable to fire. After this, one of the simplest steps toward fire safety is cleanliness. Hay, dust and other debris should be swept out of barns, loose or broken boards should be replaced with flame-retardant wood, yards should be kept clear of twigs and leaves and be regularly mowed.

Of particular concern is fuel vapor from machinery. Refueling should always be done outside and away from structures, so the vapor isn't absorbed into wood. Tightly packed bales of damp hay can build up chemicals and may not dissipate heat effectively, so hay should be kept dry and the temperature monitored. A no-smoking policy around these things is also important for safety.

Another important precaution involves electrical safety. Electrical devices should be kept clean of dust to prevent overheating, and should be kept away from combustibles. Outdoor electrical cables and circuits must be enclosed and kept safe from animals and the elements. To prepare for the likelihood of summer thunderstorms, lightning rods and grounding cables should be used.

As a further precaution, portable fire extinguishers should be kept throughout the property.

Following these steps can very important to avoiding loss of property, income, or even lives through the hot season.