

BARN AND FARM INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Note: The Barn and Farm Inspection Checklist is a tool that helps farm owners realize how susceptible their farm is to a barn fire. Circle the answer that represents the situation on your farm. The higher your score, the higher your chance to being susceptible to a fire.

Fire Risk Factors – External Conditions

A. Barn / Stable distance and visibility from residence.

1. Can be clearly seen, 1 to 100 feet.
2. Mostly in view, 101 to 200 feet.
3. Mostly not visible, 201 to 300 feet.
4. Not visible.

B. Barn / Stable visibility from neighbors.

1. Less than 1 mile, clearly seen.
2. 1 to 2 miles, mostly in view.
3. 3 to 5 miles, not in view.
4. More than 5 miles, not in view.

C. Distance to nearest fire station.

1. Less than 1 mile.
2. 1 to 2 miles.
3. 2 to 5 miles.
4. Over 5 miles.

D. Type of public fire protection system.

1. All paid, full time, 24 hour manning.
2. Paid, full time core, volunteer support.
3. Paid, full time driver, volunteer core.
4. All volunteer.

E. Reliability of public telephone system.

1. No failures to connect.
2. Rare failures to connect.
3. One failure per month.
4. Often fails to connect, 1 failure per week.

F. Emergency communications.

1. Full 911 or similar computer driven system.
2. Manual, centralized E911 or similar system.
3. Other fire or police 24 hour phone.
4. No emergency system.

G. Road access - - external public, internal, bridges and other choke points.

1. All paved roads and no choke points.
2. Paved and graveled roads, no choke points.
3. Paved and graveled roads, 1 choke point.
4. Paved and graveled roads, 2 or more choke points.

H. Fire fighting water sources – ponds, lakes, streams, dry hydrants, wells, access.

1. Water source, 200 feet from barn / stable.
2. Water source, over 200 feet to 500 feet away, any pumper.
3. Water source, over 200 feet, brush truck only.
4. No water source.

I. Topography and vegetation fire hazards.

1. Mostly level, light vegetation.
2. Mostly level, medium vegetation.
3. Hilly or heavy vegetation.
4. Mountainous, heavy vegetation.

J. Livestock escape routes and holding pens.

1. Individual external doors, holding pen 100 feet away.
2. 15 foot or more wide aisle, less than 100 feet long.
3. Multiple aisle or over 100 feet long.
4. Difficult access, holding pen 200 feet or more away.

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Fire Risk Factors – Barn Construction

K. Overall architectural design.

1. Simply, no hay storage, wide single aisle.
2. No hay storage, multiple aisles.
3. Overhead hay storage, narrow single aisle.
4. Overhead hay storage, multiple aisles.

L. Roof – type, construction, pitch, condition.

1. Hip, tile, moderate, no leaks.
2. Hip, fireproof shingles, moderate, no leaks.
3. Hip / gambrel, fireproof shingles, steep, no leaks.
4. Hip / gambrel, wood shingles, steep, leaks.

M. Walls – construction, number, condition.

1. Concrete, 4, good.
2. Concrete, more than 4, good.
3. Wood, 4, good.
4. Wood, more than 4, good.

N. Floors – type and grade.

1. Earth level.
2. Earth, not level.
3. Paved, level.
4. Paved, not level.

O. Windows – number, location, type, open/shut.

1. 1 per stall, ends, overhead glass.
2. 1 per stall, plus overhead glass.
3. 1 per stall or wood.
4. None

P. Doors – number, locations.

1. Multiple per aisle.
2. 3 or more, ends of aisles.
3. 2, at end of aisle.
4. One.

Q. Electrical system – fuse boxes, type, wire, armored.

1. Meets code, fully armored public system.
2. Meets code, partially armored public system.
3. Meets code, not armored public/private system.
4. Does not meet code, not armored.

R. Public power supply – interruption, constant flow.

1. No failure, no fluctuation.
2. Rare failures, some flow rate fluctuation.
3. 1 failure per month, some fluctuation.
4. 1 failure per week, fluctuates often.

S. Telephones – location.

1. 2 separated phones in barn / stable.
2. 2 phones in barn / stable.
3. Phones in residence.
4. No telephones.

T. Frost-proof hydrants – location, number.

1. At end of each aisle.
2. One at end of aisle.
3. At another building or pasture.
4. None.

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Fire Risk Factors – Barn Contents

U. Bedding – type, storage, application, location.

1. Sawdust
2. Shavings / paper.
3. Straw: with no barn/stable storage.
4. Straw: in barn/stable storage.

V. Hay – storage, location.

1. External to barn/stable, not beyond daily storage.
2. External storage, weekly storage.
3. Overhead and up to three months.
4. Overhead, season long.

W. Tack – storage, cleaning, location.

1. None in barn/stable.
2. Tack Room, clear floor, metal used cloth containers.
3. Tack Room, cluttered floor, metal used cloth containers.
4. Tack Room, no used cloth containers, floor cluttered.

X. General storage – type, location.

1. None
2. Extensive horse related.
3. Non-horse related materials.
4. Trucks, tractors, mowers, other non-horse related materials.

Y. Livestock Occupancy – number, breeds, age, condition.

1. 4 horses or less, cold breeds.
2. 4 horses or less, warm or hot breeds.
3. More than 4 horses, cold breeds.
4. More than 4 horses, warm or hot breeds.

Z. Human Occupancy – quarters, office, professionals, riders.

1. None
2. Lounge
3. Lounge, office.
4. Lounge, office, quarters.

AA. Cleanliness – dust, debris, discards.

1. No dust, debris or discards.
2. No dust, some discards.
3. Dusty, considerable either debris or discards.
4. Dusty, extensive debris and discards.

BB. Heaters and fans – number, type, condition.

1. All quarters.
2. All cleaned each year.
3. 1 not cleaned each year.
4. More than 1 not cleaned each year.

CC. Heaters and fans – number, cleaned, cycle.

1. All quarterly.
2. All cleaned each year.
3. 1 not cleaned each year.
4. More than 1 not cleaned each year.

DD. Other electrical devices – number, type, condition.

1. None
2. 1 hot plate or bucket heater, etc.
3. Several in intermittent use.
4. Many in constant use.

EE. Extension cords – number, type, length, condition.

1. None
2. 1 long heavy cord
3. Multiple long, heavy cords
4. Multiple light cords, over nails.

FF. Horses – number, type, length, location.

1. 1 per hydrant reaches all parts of building.
2. 1 per bran/stable does reach all parts of building.
3. 1 per bran/stable does not reach all parts of building.
4. None

GG. Vermin – damage, number, type.

1. No evidence
2. Some evidence
3. Extensive evidence
4. Damage readily seen everywhere

This resource was developed by Reid Folsom, Farm Consultant and published by Virginia Cooperative Extension with his permission.