

## **Use of Farm Buildings for Assembly Occupancy**

### **For the Township of Douro-Dummer**

When farm buildings such as barns, pole barns, sheds are used to host events such as dances, weddings, concerts, religious gatherings, etc., the building use is classified as "assembly occupancy". Buildings used for assembly occupancy must comply with applicable fire safety requirements in the Building Code and the Fire Code. Assembly occupancy requirements in the Building Code and the Fire Code deal with fire and life safety features, such as exits and means of egress, fire separations, flame spread ratings, fire alarm and detection systems, and sprinkler systems, as appropriate to the use of the building. These features, along with controls on fire hazards and implementation of emergency procedures, are needed to ensure the safety of occupants in the event of a fire emergency. Persons attending assembly functions in farm buildings that lack such features and controls may be at serious risk in the event of a fire emergency.

**Assembly occupancy** means the occupancy or the use of a **building**, or part thereof, by a gathering of persons for civic, political, travel, religious, social, educational, recreational or like purposes or for the consumption of food or drink.

A farm owner intending to use a farm building to host assembly events should contact the local building official to determine whether a Change of Use permit is required. Compliance with the conditions of this permit would ensure that applicable health, structural and fire safety requirements in the Building Code are satisfied and that the building can be safely used for assembly purposes. The farm owner should also consult the municipal fire department on the applicability of Fire Code provisions.