

Changes of Occupancy: Agricultural Buildings
Barns Used for Assembly Uses

The following items must be addressed for Agricultural buildings, such as barns or driving sheds, to be *temporarily used for an assembly type use*, such as a hall, retreat, place of gathering, wedding reception etc.:

The Official Plan and Zoning By-Law do not permit the permanent use of agricultural buildings for such assembly uses. Occasional use (maximum 4 times/year/property) may be considered subject to the requirements of the Building Code and provided that the event involves residents of the property and is not commercial in nature.

Prior to issuance of a building permit for temporary change of occupancy a detailed description of the event will be required to ensure compliance with applicable law (ie Zoning).

1. **Structural:** A Professional Engineer must be retained to review the design of the building for structural adequacy based on the intended use(s) and loading (ie: conversion from low human occupancy use).
2. **Fire and Life Safety:** An Architect and/or Engineer(s) must be retained to review the building for fire and life safety related issues, including but not limited to:
 - a. Fire separation requirements – between floors, rooms/spaces, exits, etc
 - b. Flame spread ratings
 - c. Sprinkler or standpipe requirements
 - d. Adequate water supply for fire fighting
 - e. Fire access routes
 - f. Fire alarm systems and Emergency lighting
 - g. Exiting – travel distances, width, panic hardware, etc
 - h. Mechanical ventilation – heating/AC, ventilation, NFPA 96 Range Hood and Suppression System
 - i. Electrical - approval must be provided from the Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) for all electrical systems associated with the building (existing and new).
 - j. Maximum occupant loads
 - k. Floor layouts/seating plans
 - l. Barrier-free access requirements
 - m. Washroom facilities and potable water availability
 - n. Septic system (or septic audit) when permanent washrooms are required
 - o. Any additional issues identified during review.

Definitions from the 2006 Building Code, Article 1.4.1.2.

Farm Building means all or part of a building, (a) that does not contain any area used for residential occupancy, (b) that is associated with and located on land devoted to the practice of farming, and (c) that is used essentially for the housing of equipment or livestock or the production, storage or processing of agricultural and horticultural produce or feeds.

Low Human Occupancy means, when applied to a farm building, an occupancy in which the occupant load is not more than 1 person per 40m² (430sf) of floor area during normal use.

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