

May 10, 2018

<name>
<address>
<city>, MN <zip>

RE: Fire Safety for Assembly Buildings

Dear property owner,

The Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division is aware of the increasing number of former agricultural buildings, which lack fire protection features, being turned into wedding barns and wineries.

We have learned that your property may have been used for such an event. The purpose of this letter is to make you aware of the fire and life safety provisions that apply to these types of buildings.

What You Need to Know

- Converting a building from a barn into one with large numbers of people changes the fire safety risks.
- Cooking fires are a leading fire safety risk in assembly buildings.
- Open flames (such as candles) along combustible decorations and building materials are other common risk factors.
- People need to be able to get out of the building quickly in a fire emergency.

Why This is Important

- Barns burn very fast and the distance from the fire department often means that there is little that the fire department can do to save the building.
- You are inviting several people into a building you own; you are responsible for their safety.
- A significant fire will impact your property, business, finances, reputation, and your industry.

What You Need to Do

- Reduce the likelihood of a fire starting (eliminate heat and flame sources).
- Provide early warning so your guests can leave in an emergency.
- Have exits that are identified, readily available, and usable at all times.
- Protect your facility to prevent fire spread.
- Have adequate insurance to protect your risk and legal exposure.

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What's Included in This Letter

- Checklist for you to complete.
- Information sheet explaining the various requirements for assembly buildings.
- Links to our website with additional information.

The Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division wants you to have a successful venture and be able to provide a safe and enjoyable venue for people who are celebrating one of the most important days of their lives. Like you, we do not want your venue in the headlines as the host of a tragic event where people were hurt or killed.

We are attaching a checklist that can help reduce your fire safety risks and provide a safer environment for your guests. You can also refer to our website at: sfm.dps.mn.gov or email us at fire.code@state.mn.us for more information.

Sincerely,

Jon Nisja, Supervisor
Minnesota State Fire Marshal Division

cc: <fire department name>