



May 1, 2024

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

We are Kawartha Lakes Haliburton Federation of Agriculture, representing over 800 farming families in the region. We are writing today regarding the proposal for Kawartha Lakes to officially join FARM 911: The Emily Project.

Background information:

Farm accidents can occur in the most remote locations, making it difficult for first responders to easily locate the emergency. We have found there is a flaw in the emergency response system – not all vacant farm property entrances have civic address signage.

Farm fields are getting bigger, and farmers are cropping land further from their home farms. One farm field could front a couple roads, and still only have one entrance point. If an accident is to occur in a farm field, how can a farmer identify where they are? The closest civic address could be kilometers away and points of reference are meaningless to the person on the other end of the call.

Not just farmers, but many different vacant properties are affected by this. Hunting camps, sugarbushes, woodlots, walking trails – they could all benefit from having a number to identify their location.

The current civic address system pre-dates cell phones, and when it was first put in place, only properties with buildings were given civic addresses because landlines were the main form of communication. Fast forward to today, when calls can be made from everywhere, but our addressing system does not include much of the farmland we work.

Our recommendation:

Our ask is that your municipality create a separate application process whereby farmland owners can request civic addresses for their vacant farm property entrances. Once a property is designated a number, the number is put into the GIS system and becomes a permanent part of the emergency response system. The most important benefit of this project is that first responders will be able to get to the scene of an accident quicker, and in turn, be able to help at the scene more effectively.

The civic address system has been in place for decades. Homes and businesses with infrastructure have been able to utilize the system since the onset – while farm businesses, whose work is often remote and isolating, have not had this advantage. Our businesses cover large geographies and its only fair that agriculture has the same access to the emergency response system as everyone else.

We understand that a fee may be a part of the application process, and we are advocating for a rate that is fair to a cost-recovery formula. As farmers, we are willing to install the sign and post ourselves, to

reduce installation cost for the municipality. It is important that the application fee is not cost prohibitive, especially since farmers may have several entrances that need addressed.

Thank you for your interest in FARM 911: The Emily Project. We look forward to getting signs in the ground.

Sincerely,
Barry Baxter
President, Kawartha Lakes/Haliburton Federation of Agriculture