

# What's the Risk?

## Fire Stops In Barns



### THE ISSUE

Fire stops are specifically designed, and regulated fire barriers built into concealed truss spaces within buildings. They are used in wood frame construction to slow or halt the spread of flame, heat, and hot gases from one area of the building to another. They slow the progression of a fire by compartmentalizing the truss space of the barn. Compartmentalization provides more time for people within the building to escape and fire services personnel to arrive. Agricultural buildings can benefit from fire having stops in the area above the ceiling and under the roof as this relatively open space provides a natural tunnel for fire to move throughout the building.



### WHAT'S THE RISK?

Too often fire stops are compromised by openings that may be added when installing wires, or due to rodent damage. While they do not provide the same fire resistance ratings as a fire wall, they are designed to provide at least 15 minutes of passive fire protection in the truss space of a barn. When a fire stop has been breached by any means, it is less effective at slowing the spread of heat, flames, and hot gases.



### WHAT CAN BE DONE?

Farm building owners should inspect fire stops for damage on a bi-monthly basis. It is the owner's responsibility to ensure fire stops have not been breached. Any breach or damage caused by moisture or condensation should be addressed immediately by a fire-stop-trained contractor in accordance with building codes. If the fire stop has been cut for a pipe or a wire, fireproof caulking or foam insulation should be used to seal the openings. Fireproof caulking or foam is designed to expand in the presence of heat, and will seal the opening to help block a fire. If a doorway has been cut into a fire stop, the door should be made of the same material as the fire stop and any gaps filled with fireproof caulking.

