



December 23, 2020

City of Port Colborne

Sent via email

Dear Mayor Steele and Councillors,

The FARM 911 initiative was born from a tragedy that affected a Quinte area farm family in the loss of their young daughter, Emily. A significant factor adding to this tragedy was the EMS's inability to locate the accident site due to the lack of farm field signage. As a result, FARM 911: the Emily Project was formed to address this concern with the goal of minimizing response times and improving the chances for a successful outcome of any future incidents.

Since its inception, FARM 911 has been busy developing partnerships with many Municipalities across Ontario. The Niagara Federation of Agriculture (NFA) has since adopted the program in the hopes that no family within our Region will have to endure a tragic loss like that of Emily Trudeau. Thus far, the Municipalities of Pelham and Wainfleet have joined the program, creating their own yellow and black 911 sign system for rural lands.

First responders understand the importance of having a location that is GIS entered and physically marked with a sign in the ground. In addition, our research has found that a cellular signal for a location is a triangulated position based on cellular towers. The cellular position is very accurate, provided all technologies are functioning correctly. However, in remote areas, cell phones drop out and fail. Our goal is to eliminate that variable.

NFA feels it is very important that we have an efficient process in place for farmers and rural landowners to apply for signs for their properties. The majority of municipalities in Niagara only apply signage to lots with new buildings in the form of entrance permits. In the meantime, there are numerous farm field entrances that have not been addressed because nobody saw the need in the initial phase-in of 911 signage.

NFA wants to work with council and staff to implement this life-saving system in your municipality. The next step is for NFA representatives to meet virtually with Port Colborne council to share more info about our project and answer any questions. We want everyone in Niagara Region to share in the success of this project. We believe it should be a community effort. Please respond with a date and time for a virtual meeting between NFA representatives and Port Colborne council members.

We have an opportunity to lead the way, as a Region, when it comes to the efficiency of emergency response.

Sincerely,
NFA Ag Safety Committee