

# Property Tax Crisis for Ontario Horse Farms

Summary - Post and Pass On to Everyone

Last Updated: Jan 22, 2005

Recently the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC) has begun to apply a little used legislative provision to reassess the property tax classification for boarding and lesson stables. Instead of assessing them as residential or farming they are assessing them as **COMMERCIAL**. This is happening all over Ontario NOW.

## **WHAT IT MEANS**

A commercial classification means that the properties are taxed at a much higher rate. If the property assessment goes from farmland to commercial this can mean an increase of as much as 2600% depending on tax rates in your municipality. In dollars, that translates to tax bills going up by \$10,000, \$15,000, \$20,000 or more. The financial impact is so severe that some horse farms have already gone out of business and many others are sure to follow.

***If You Own or Lease a Barn*** and you offer boarding or lessons - you are at risk. It doesn't matter if you have one boarder or one hundred - teach two lessons a week or two hundred - whether you have 3 acres or 1000 - your facility can be re-assessed and all or part of it will go to commercial under current legislation. Building permits will cause a re-assessment. Also, an assessor may just decide to drop in. Ask them to book an appointment. If you have been re-assessed, be sure to go through the appeal process. See [www.mpac.ca](http://www.mpac.ca). Please call Association of Riding Establishments (ARE) or us - we may be able to help.

***If You Own a Horse*** and your barn is re-assessed - your board will go up - way up. Even worse, the farm may be forced out of business and your horse will be homeless.

***If You Take Lessons*** and your barn is re-assessed - your lesson costs will increase - dramatically. You may even have to find a new place to ride, if your barn has to close.

***If You Provide Services*** to the horse industry and the number of horse farms are significantly reduced - who will be your clients?

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO**

The ARE and the Ontario Equestrian Association has started to lobby for legislative change that will be fair. Meetings with government are underway now. Help us inform everyone about this tax. **Hand this out - POST this everywhere.**

To show the government that you care, go to [www.horse.on.ca](http://www.horse.on.ca). Follow the link to MPAC - Tax Crisis - **Letter Writing Campaign**. Print the letters, sign and send. Give copies to your barn, friends, your parents - anyone who is over 18 and cares about the future of the equine industry. Talk to and write your MPP's also.

**IF YOU HAVE BEEN RE-ASSESSED**, please **contact us** so that we can understand the impact across the province and we may be able to give you some tips. We have been through the process. For updates call ARE MPAC Committee Chairs, Leslie Brooks / Jim Waechter 519-696-3688. Email: [JLnet@Quixnet.net](mailto:JLnet@Quixnet.net).