



Emergency Management, Hazard Mitigation & National Flood Insurance Program

Diane Wessel, Conservation Planning & Zoning

Recently, I have had several questions from local officials about how the Emergency Management, Hazard Mitigation, and National Flood Insurance programs relate to one another and help prepare us for emergency situations.

Marathon County Emergency Management (MCEM) is responsible for preparedness, response and recovery in emergency situations. MCEM acts to coordinate the response by and between local municipalities, Marathon County, State and Federal agencies.

The Marathon County Hazard Mitigation Plan is one of many plans developed by MCEM. Hazard Mitigation planning identifies actions that communities may take to reduce the cost of damage to property, life and safety *prior* to a hazard or to minimize the loss of services.

There are many examples of activities that communities can take to manage hazards:

Structural: culverts, bridges, and retention ponds

Policy: land use planning, and National Flood Insurance Program

Preparedness: mutual aid agreements, weather radios, and response training.

The National Flood Insurance Program is an example of a land use policy that can reduce the hazards and taxpayer financial burden associated with damage from floods. In participating communities, owners of homes or businesses in flood areas can purchase flood insurance. In the event of flood damage, the cost of recovery would be covered through the insurance rather than federal disaster assistance.

National Flood Insurance Program Participation

Diane Wessel, Conservation, Planning & Zoning

NFIP is a national program offering flood insurance benefits to residents of participating communities. Most lenders require flood insurance to be in place on homes in flood areas.

To participate in the program, counties, cities and villages must adopt flood plain zoning ordinances, approve the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) and apply to the program.

Towns are participants through the County's participation.

Most Marathon County communities are currently participants in NFIP. However, with the recent revisions to FIRM, it is necessary to take action to continue participation.



All incorporated communities must meet NFIP requirements and receive FEMA approval by July 2010 to remain active participants.

For more information on program requirements: Gary Heinrichs (608) 266-3093

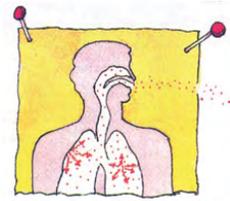
To view DNR's model floodplain ordinance: www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/water/wm/dsfm/flood/

Special points of interest:

- Radon test kits available at the Marathon County Health Department
- Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System maintenance program expanded
- Census 2010 forms to be mailed beginning in February
- Eau Pleine aerator will be operational when ice conditions permit installation

January is Radon Action Month

Dale Grosskurth, Health Department



Radon is a cancer-causing radioactive gas. It is the leading cause of cancer among non-smokers and the second leading cause among smokers. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimates radon causes more than 21,000 lung cancer deaths annually.

Radon occurs naturally from the breakdown of uranium in soil and gets into the air you breathe. You can't see, smell, or taste radon, but it may be a problem in your home.

Testing is the only way to know your risk and is inexpensive (\$8) and easy.

High radon levels are common in Marathon County. Two of every three tests have results over the EPA action level of 4 pico Curies per liter of air (pCi/L). Many results are over 20 pCi/L with some over 200. The highest radon levels can be expected in winter months.

A very successful means of removing radon is known as a *sub-slab depressurization system*. It consists of a fan or blower which draws air from the soil beneath a building and discharges it to the outside of the home. We have a number of local contractors with training and experience installing these radon systems.

New homes can be built to prevent radon entry that may not need a fan to be effective. If test results show radon levels are still elevated, the work done during construction makes adding a fan easier and less expensive.

For more information or to buy a test kit, call the Marathon County Health Department:
(715) 261-1900
or 888-LOW-RADON (569-7236)

You can also visit the Wisconsin Radon Information website at www.lowradon.org

Liquor Licenses and County Permits

Dale Grosskurth, Health Department

Taverns or restaurants must receive both a local license from the municipality and a facility permit from the Marathon County Health Department (MCHD) to sell liquor for on-premise consumption.

With each new liquor license approval, a facility must have a new MCHD permit to operate.

MCHD has found facilities with a new liquor license, but the operators did not know that a new MCHD permit is required before opening. State Statutes, Administrative Codes, and Marathon County Public Health Regulation require a permit to operate.

MCHD can provide valuable guidance to ensure compliance and avoid unnecessary costs for new owners/operators.

Once contacted, we can set up an inspection, start the licensing process and if needed, discuss plans for structural or operational changes.

Please recommend applicants to our office at 715-261-1900 or share the contact information with us of those applying for a liquor license. We'll initiate a call to help them get started successfully.

Spring is Tree Planting Season—Planters Available

Jill Schroeder, Department of Natural Resources

Know anyone interested in planting trees this spring? Marathon County, in cooperation with the DNR Forestry office in Wausau, has two tree planters available for landowners wishing to plant 3000 or more trees.

Planters are the pull behind variety. One has pioneer end hydraulics and the other a self contained hydraulic system.

They require a minimum of a 35 horsepower tractor to pull them. Rental rates are \$25 per 1000 trees (minimum \$75 charge).

It's never too early to start planning for tree planting!

For more information or to coordinate rental call Jill Schroeder, DNR Forester, at 715-359-0646



www.dnr.wi.gov/forestry



Septic Tank Pumping Requirements Expanded

Jim Burgener, Conservation Planning and Zoning

POWTS is an acronym for Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System. This includes any system that disposes and treats wastewater on the same property where the wastewater is produced. Since holding tanks do not treat wastewater, they are not considered a POWTS and are subject to a different maintenance schedule. Conventional and mound systems are POWTS.

Marathon County established a POWTS maintenance program in 1983. Owners of POWTS are required to have their system visually inspected and pumped every three years.

The purpose of the maintenance program is to protect our surface and ground water. An improperly functioning POWTS can cause both environmental and public health hazards.

Currently, the Marathon County maintenance program applies to all systems built since July 1, 1980. Due to changes in the administrative code and in the interest of further protecting the environment and public health, the maintenance program is being expanded to include all systems.

The expansion of the program requires a complete inventory of POWTS built prior to July 1, 1980.

Conservation Planning and Zoning (CPZ) will use property records, computer mapping, and field identification to identify POWTS not currently in the maintenance program. The inventory must be complete in 2011.

It is necessary for owners of POWTS not currently in the maintenance program to have their system inspected and begin a three year pumping schedule by 2013.

This spring, CPZ will begin notifying owners who need their system inspected and placed in the maintenance program.

Questions? Contact Dale Dimond at 715-261-6028

Census 2010—Make Sure Your Residents are Counted!

Diane Wessel, Conservation Planning & Zoning

The results from Census counts are used to allocate federal funds to State and local communities and to determine political districts.

Communities that do not completely count and represent their population risk unequal political representation, as well as a loss of revenue sharing, business opportunity and grant funding.

Guarantee your community's funding and political representation by encouraging residents to complete the Census form. Here is how you can help:

1. Distribute information as residents pay their property taxes
2. Display information at your municipal center and area businesses
3. Assist residents who need help completing Census forms

Contact Diane Wessel for Census promotional materials.

The Census Bureau is Hiring!
Applicants are especially needed in rural Marathon County.

- Temporary jobs
- Paid training
- Flexible hours
- Mileage reimbursement

This employment might not reduce financial assistance benefits.

Contact: 866-861-2010

www.2010censusjobs.gov

Legislative Spotlight: AB 260—Plat Review based on Land Use

Diane Wessel, Conservation Planning & Zoning

What does it say?

AB 260 (Senate companion bill is SB 117) states that cities and villages cannot object to plats or Certified Survey Maps (CSMs) on the basis of the proposed land use within their extra-territorial plat approval jurisdiction unless the denial is based on a cooperative extraterritorial zoning agreement or plan.

What do others have to say?

League of Municipalities: opposes, because it eliminates a key tool municipalities have to implement their comprehensive plans and control sprawl.

Towns Association: supports, because the effect of the bill is to encourage extraterritorial zoning by agreement to control land uses rather than unilateral extraterritorial plat approval.

What is the status?

AB 260 passed 14-0 in committee on Renewable Energy and Rural Affairs, referred to Rules.

SB 117 referred to committee on Rural Issues, Biofuels, and Information Technology

What should we do?

Learn more and contact your legislator and voice your opinion!

Community Connections

Marathon County CPZ
210 River Drive
Wausau, WI 54403-5449

Nonprofit
US Postage
PAID
Permit #186
Wausau, WI

A PERIODIC NEWSLETTER BY THE MARATHON COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES COMMITTEE AND DEPARTMENTS

Conservation, Planning & Zoning: 261-6040
Health: 261-1900
Highway: 261-1800
Parks, Recreation & Forestry: 261-1550
Solid Waste: 446-3339
UW-Extension: 261-1230

The Marathon County Environmental Resources Committee provides guidance on policies and strategies that balance, protect and enhance environmental and community resources through cooperation with all levels of government.

We're on the Web!
www.co.marathon.wi.us

Putting Your Comprehensive Plan into Action

A Plan Commission workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, January 20, 2010 from 7-9:30 pm, at the Rib Mountain Municipal Center. Participants will learn about plan commission roles and using the local comprehensive plan in decision-making. Registration is \$10. For more information: Mary Kluz at Marathon County UW-Extension 261-1241 or Diane Wessel at Marathon County Conservation, Planning and Zoning 261-6042

Combined Effort Restores the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir Aerator

Mike Paul, Vice-President of the Big Eau Pleine Citizens Organization

The Big Eau Pleine Reservoir Citizen Organization (BEPCO) has successfully completed fundraising efforts to upgrade the Big Eau Pleine Reservoir aerator.

The \$27,000 goal was greatly exceeded, receiving over \$32,000 in support. The additional funds will allow for completion of upgrades not included in the initial project.

"This shows the concern and involvement of the local community in beginning to address the issues on the Big Eau Pleine, and with the aerator upgrade, the first step is taken to help prevent future fish kills on the reservoir," said Liz Zentner, who led the fundraising effort.

To follow the progress, go to the BEPCO web site:
www.bigeaupleine.org

The money raised by BEPCO combined with a grant from Marathon County's American Transmission Company (ATC) fund for environmental projects will assure completion of this project with an initial projected cost of \$54,000.

A special thanks goes out to the Town of Bergen for their assistance in securing the ATC funds.

The project continues this winter with the replacement of the aeration lines and upgrades to the blower pumps and pump house. The original aerator was installed in 1981 and was showing its age. "These upgrades will bring new, up to date, technology and a real improvement to the efficiency of the system" said Tim Garrigan, BEPCO President.

Photo courtesy of Rande Loining



Volunteers Needed!!

Volunteers are needed during the weeks of January 11 and 18 to lay out the aerator lines and rebar on the ice. Once the lines are established, the ice will be cut to allow the lines to sink.

To volunteer, contact Tim Garrigan at: 715-897-0342 or
President@bigeaupleine.org