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INFORMATION FOR OBTAINING PERMITS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING

The following steps will describe the procedure for obtaining required sanitary and zoning permits for a single family dwelling and also applying for a uniform (911) address number.

1. Contract with a licensed Certified Soil Tester (CST) to conduct a Soil and Site Evaluation Report. This report is what was commonly referred to in the past as a "perc test".
2. Take the completed Soil and Site Evaluation Report to a licensed master plumber or master plumber restricted to installation of private on-site wastewater treatment systems (POWTS). You may wish to take the report to a number of plumbers to obtain bids if that is your desire. The installing plumber will draw plans based upon the CST's report. In some case, certain types of systems (such as mounds, at-grades, holding tanks and in-ground pressure) require state plan approval. If this is the case, the installing plumber will submit the plans to the Department of Commerce, Safety and Buildings Division for plan approval. The plumber will then submit the plans to this office along with an application for a sanitary permit. The sanitary permit can be issued after it is verified for compliance with Wisconsin State Administrative Code COMM 83 and the Buffalo County Sanitary Ordinance.
3. A zoning permit can only be issued after a sanitary permit is issued or if a system meeting code requirements already exists to serve the proposed house. A uniform address number must also be issued if one does not exist at the access point to your property or if a number exists but is assigned to another house or other improvements. Submit the enclosed applications for a zoning permit (green sheet) and uniform address number. Provide a detailed plot plan with the zoning permit application. Make sure measurements requested on the address number application are accurate to avoid extra fees if a revised sign must be ordered.

Enclosed are application forms for a zoning permit and uniform address number. Included is a list of Certified Soil Testers, Plumbers, Zoning Ordinance Summary and Zoning Permit Application Information Sheet. Please be advised that the only persons credentialed to apply for a sanitary permit are master plumbers and master plumbers restricted to sewer installations. Only specifically licensed persons may conduct plumbing activities outside of a home or any other structure requiring private on-site wastewater treatment. If you have any questions or need assistance in completing any application, please contact Buffalo County Zoning at 608-685-6218 or 6217. Thank you.

Summary of the Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance

The intent of this summary of the Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance is to provide residents of Buffalo County with information on some of the major provisions of this ordinance.

The zoning ordinance was adopted in April, 1965, by the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors. It was amended in February, 1971, to include a Shoreland and a Subdivision ordinance, in December, 1978, to include a Floodplain ordinance, and in July, 1980, to include a Sanitary ordinance. County Zoning is in effect in all of Buffalo County except the incorporated areas (e.g. cities and villages). The purpose and intent of the ordinance is to provide protection for the landowner's values, and to protect the health and well-being of the residents.

Land in Buffalo County has been zoned in the following land use districts: Agricultural, Residential, Commercial, Recreational, and Industrial. The permitted uses in each of these districts are specifically spelled out in the Zoning Ordinance. In addition to the land use districts, special requirements are in effect based on soil type, terrain, and distance from adjacent property lines, streams, and roads. Official maps of current land use districts are recorded and on file in the County Clerk's Office and the Zoning Office. Zoning Ordinance copies are also available for sale at the Zoning Office.

Some major provisions of the Zoning Ordinance are as follows:

Cases where zoning permits are required:

- 1) Where any building or other structure, except farm structures meeting setback requirement, is erected, moved or structurally altered so as to change its use or increase its' floor area.
- 2) Where any land is substantially altered.
- 3) Where 50% or more of the equalized value of the structure is destroyed and is being repaired or altered.
- 4) Where any building or other structure located in the Floodplain or Shoreland District, is erected, moved or structurally altered so as to change its' use or increase its' floor area.
- 5) Where any mobile home is not located in an approved mobile home park.

Cases where zoning permits are not required:

- 1) For any accessory building costing \$500.00 or less, provided such building conforms to all the setback, yard, and open space requirements of this ordinance.
- 2) For any improvements or alterations to an existing building in the amount of \$1,500.00 or less, which shall not affect a structural change in use or encroach upon any open space.
- 3) For any maintenance repairs, regardless of cost.
- 4) For permanent farm buildings and structures, except farm homes, which are located so as to meet the setback requirements of highways, adjacent property lines, and navigable streams and lakes.
- 5) For the construction of any fence.
- 6) Mobile homes in zoned and licensed mobile home park.

Cases where sanitary permits are required:

- 1) Where work on change or use of a structure or facility requires private sewage disposal facilities.
- 2) For the installation, extension, enlargement, conversion, or structural alteration of any septic tank and/or absorption area.

Highway setback restrictions:

Class A- State and Federal Roads: 110 feet from centerline or 50 feet from the right-of-way, whichever is greater (the WIDOT must review any parcel split along a state or federal highway).

Class B- County Trunks: 63 feet from the centerline or 30 feet from the right-of-way, whichever is greater.

Class C- Town Roads: 50 feet from the centerline or 17 feet from the right-of-way, whichever is greater.

Other setback restrictions:

- 1) Side yard for a residence is 10 feet.
- 2) An accessory building (example: garage) is 5 feet the Residential District and 10 feet in the Agricultural District.
- 3) Rear yard of residence is 40 feet.
- 4) Livestock building is 200 feet from adjacent property.
- 5) Maximum height for an accessory farm building, including silos, shall be the setback from the highway right-of-way, a distance equal to the height of the structure as well as meeting all other setback requirements of this ordinance.

Lot size for a residence with on-site sewage disposal (Varies depending on soil type)

- 1) Residence on Suitable Sandy Soils requires 12,000 square feet and 75 feet of width.
- 2) Residence on Suitable Medium Textured Soils requires 24,000 square feet and 100 feet of width.
- 3) Residence on Suitable Clayey Soils require 36,000 square feet and 125 feet of width.
- 4) Residence in the Steep Soils Overlay District require 10 acres and 1,000 feet of width.

Classifications of soils are listed in the Zoning Ordinance and are based on soil types designated in the Soil Survey of Buffalo County.

Shoreland Requirements

The Shoreland and Floodplain Ordinances have restrictions within 300 feet of a stream and 1,000 feet of a lake. All construction within 75 of the ordinary high-water mark of a stream is prohibited. All buildings within 300 feet of a stream or 1,000 feet of a lake require a permit.

Zoning Permits

A zoning permit is a permit issued by the Zoning Administrator after an application is submitted and where the ordinance allows the proposed use and all requirements are met. Where applicable, a sanitary permit must be issued prior to issuing a zoning permit.

Sanitary Permits

A sanitary permit is a permit issued by the Zoning Administrator for the installation of a private sewage system. Soil tests are required prior to issuance of a sanitary permit. State approval for alternate private sewage systems is required prior to county issuance of a sanitary permit.

Variance or Special Exception (Conditional Use) Permits

A special exception permit is a one issued by the Zoning Administrator following a public hearing and approval from the Board of Adjustment. These are required for all conditional uses as listed in the Zoning Ordinances or where the literal enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance will result in unnecessary hardship. All public hearings require two weeks of official public notice of the hearing in a newspaper, (Class II Notice) followed by a week waiting period after the last publication.

Land Use Rezone

A land use change from one district to another requires a public hearing, (Class II Notice) before the Zoning Committee, and action by the Board of Supervisors to permit or deny the land use change, eg Agricultural to Commercial Use.

Applications for zoning permits, special exception, and variance permits and land use changes are available from the Zoning Office.

Administrative Fees:

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| 1. Zoning Permit | \$ 40.00 |
| 2. Uniform Address Number (\$60.00 for 2 nd sign) | \$ 45.00 |
| 3. Sanitary Permits (Mound, At-Grade, Conventional, etc) | \$250.00 |
| 4. Non-Plumbing Sanitary Permits (Privies, Comp Toilets, etc) | \$125.00 |
| 5. Variance, Special Exception, Conditional Use | \$200.00 |
| 6. Appeals to Board of Adjustment | \$200.00 |
| 7. Rezone Permit | \$300.00 |
| 8. Ordinance Amendment | \$300.00 |
| 9. Plat Review | \$300.00 |

Buffalo County Zoning Permit Application Information

The following are some standards for development and additional information that may be of interest when applying a zoning permit. This is not an all-inclusive list, however, it explains some programs that are not administered by the Zoning Department.

A sanitary permit is required to be issued and a private on-site wastewater treatment system (POWTS) or non-plumbing sanitation system (privy, composting toilet) installed to serve structures requiring private sewage treatment. The sanitary permit must be issued before a zoning permit can be issued. Construction may then commence after the zoning permit is issued.

Homeowners in Wisconsin who use their home as their primary residence on January 1st of the year in which property taxes are levied qualify for a Lottery Credit. Please contact the Buffalo County Treasurer's Office for information on claiming this credit. You may call (608) 685-6215 and direct correspondence to Marilynn Sheahan, Buffalo County Treasurer, PO Box 28, Alma, WI 54610-0028, or email to marilynn.sheahan@buffalocounty.com

Most access roads or driveways must meet certain local or state standards. If your driveway accesses your property from a town road, contact your township chairman for information. Contact your Town Chairperson for any other township or Uniform Dwelling Code (UDC) Permits that may be required by the township. If you gain access from a county highway, please contact the Buffalo County Highway Department at (608) 685-6226. A permit from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation is required if you wish to construct a driveway to access a state or federal highway. In addition, the DOT reviews all parcel split or land divisions that abut state or federal highways if the parcel was created after February 1, 1999. Please contact the DOT District 5 at (608) 785-9071.

Supplementary development regulations affect certain areas in Buffalo County including area in the Steep Soils Overlay District and areas in close proximity to rivers, streams, lakes, and wetlands. Please contact the Zoning Department for minimum lot dimensions, development regulations or if need be, an onsite visit. You may also purchase a copy of any of our ordinances (Zoning, Floodplain, Shoreland/Wetland, Subdivision, Sanitary, or Apiary Ordinance) at a fee of \$6.00 per ordinance. We will also provide a brief summary of our zoning ordinance free of charge upon request.

If you have any questions, please contact the Buffalo County Zoning Department at (608) 685-6218 or (608) 685-6217, or direct all correspondence to Buffalo County Zoning, PO Box 492, Alma, WI 54610. Our email addresses are:

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or

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