

# BUFFALO COUNTY UNIFORM ADDRESSING ORDINANCE

FINAL DRAFT



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Appreciation and thanks to all involved in this large and important cooperative effort to assure that the residents and visitors to Buffalo County have the advantage of an addressing system that helps to assure rapid location by emergency services and first responder personnel.

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## CHAPTER 1

### TITLE, AUTHORITY, GENERAL PROVISIONS

The Board of Supervisors of Buffalo County, Wisconsin does so ordain as follows:

**1. Title.**

This Ordinance shall be known as, referred to, or cited as the Buffalo County Uniform Addressing Ordinance.

**2. Authority.**

The provisions of this Ordinance are adopted pursuant to the authority granted by Wisconsin Statutes ss. 59.54(4).

**3. Purpose.**

The purpose of this Ordinance is to promote and protect the health, safety, and general welfare of the public of Buffalo County by providing the most practical, efficient, and logical means of physically locating properties and structures located in the County. The primary and vital purpose of an addressing system is to provide the means and standards for the most rapid location of property by emergency service providers including; emergency medical service, fire departments, law enforcement, and other first responders and service agencies. The system will also serve the U.S. Postal Service and the public at large in the timely and efficient delivery of services.

It is the intent of this Ordinance to establish the method by which address numbers are assigned, as well as how signs are obtained, installed, and maintained. It is further intended to provide for requirements for road naming and the review process and responsibilities involved in assuring all public and private drives are named and signed in accordance with accepted criteria.

**4. Jurisdiction.**

The jurisdiction of this Ordinance shall include all lands and water in Buffalo County located outside the limits of incorporated cities and villages.

**5. Abrogation and Greater Restrictions.**

It is not intended by this Ordinance to repeal, abrogate, annul, impair, or interfere with any existing ordinances, rules, or regulations adopted by Buffalo County. However, wherever this Ordinance imposes greater restrictions, the provisions of this Ordinance shall govern.

**6. Severability.**

If any section, clause, provision, or portion of this Ordinance is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this Ordinance shall not be affected thereby. This Ordinance shall not create liability on the part of, or cause action against, Buffalo County or any office or employee thereof for any damages that may result from reliance on this Ordinance.

**7. Effective Date.**

This Ordinance shall be effective upon adoption by the Buffalo County Board of Supervisors and shall take effect the day of adoption.

## CHAPTER 2

### UNIFORM ADDRESSING SYSTEM

#### 1. Addressing System.

- A. Grid System. The official addressing system of Buffalo County is the grid system as established and mapped by the County in 1989. The official addressing map is kept on file in the office of the GIS Coordinator.
- B. Address Number Determination. The grid system so established allows for only 50 even and 50 odd numbered addresses per mile of roadway, the equivalent of one address every 52.8 feet of road length on each side of a road. An address number designates the intersection point of a driveway centerline with a public road. Address numbers are derived from measurements taken from the north or east grid section with the result adjusted to correspond to the side of the road the subject driveway and property are located on.
- C. Even / Odd Address Number Determination. All driveways and properties on the east side of north-south road and all driveways and properties on the north side of east-west road shall be assigned even numbers. All driveways and properties on the west side of north-south roads and all driveways and properties on the south side of east-west roads shall be assigned odd address numbers. Roads that loop or circle may be addressed in a manner that keeps the even numbers on one side and odd numbers on another side, avoiding potential 'flip-flop' in the even/odd designations.
- D. Address Prefix Determination. All address numbers assigned to north-south road shall be preceded by an "S". All address numbers assigned to east-west road shall be preceded by a "W".
- E. Official Address. The official uniform address number will be a combination of the grid number determination with the appropriate alpha prefix and the road name such as: S1234 Chicken Valley Road.

#### 2. Applicability.

- A. Applicability. The Uniform Addressing System shall apply to:
  - 1. All dwellings as defined in the Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance with the exception of Accessory Dwellings.
  - 2. Primitive Hunting Cabins.
  - 3. Recreational Vehicles placed or located for a period of more than 30 (thirty) days.
  - 4. All Commercial and Industrial structures.

5. All Principal Structures, defined as the primary or predominant structure on a property that relates to the overall use of the property.
6. Upon the first issuance of a zoning permit allowing the construction of a structure on a property.
7. Vacant land only upon application by the property owner.

### **3. Address Assignment.**

- A. Uniform Address Application. The owner(s) of property which require the assignment of an address number or a replacement sign shall complete a 'Uniform Address Application' and submit the form and the designated fee to the Zoning Department.

The Uniform Address Application shall be submitted prior to the issuance of a zoning permit allowing the construction of a principal structure.

- B. Address Assignment.

1. Upon receipt of an application and fee, the Zoning Department shall determine and assign an address number. Upon address assignment the determination will be forwarded to the GIS Coordinator and the E911 Coordinator for review.
2. Address numbers shall be assigned on the basis of the location of the centerline of the driveway access point as it intersects the public roadway or named private drive.
3. Principal structures with multiple driveway access points shall be addressed based on the location of the midpoint of the two outer driveway access points. If one driveway access point is elongated and accesses at a significant distance from the principal structure, the principal structure shall be addressed based on the location of the access point closest to the principal structure.
4. If a new address conflicts with one or more existing address numbers, the existing address numbers shall be changed to resolve the conflict. The cost of replacement signs shall be the responsibility of the property owner requiring the new address.
5. If the location of the driveway access point changes the Zoning Department shall be notified. The existing address number may remain unless or until such time the change disrupts the orderly and uniform addressing system as detailed in this Ordinance.
6. Changing the location of the driveway to another roadway shall require the principal structure to be re-addressed.
7. Principal structures with the main front entrance facing one roadway and having a driveway accessing upon another roadway shall be addressed based on the location of the driveway access point.

8. Address numbers along the same road shall not be duplicated.
9. Parcels or properties with two single family dwellings that are separated by more than 250 feet shall require separate addresses for each dwelling.
10. Duplexes, Twin Homes, or side by side dwelling structures shall each be assigned an individual address number.
11. Apartment buildings and mobile home and RV parks shall be assigned one single address number. Individual units in such groupings shall be referred to by apartment number or unit number. Individual units must display the unit number in a consistent and conspicuous manner on reflective signs with the alpha or numeric designation in figures a minimum 2 inches in height. A map of the property showing the units or lots shall be submitted to the Zoning Department.
12. Upon assignment of a new address or an address change the Zoning Department shall notify in the form of a letter the: property owner, applicable Town Clerk, GIS Department, postmaster, Sheriff's Department-E911 Coordinator, local power/utility company, and the County Treasurer.
13. Removal of an address number shall be done only under circumstances deemed appropriate as determined by the Zoning Department in conjunction with the GIS Coordinator and the E911 Coordinator.
14. In order to maintain the purpose and intent of this Ordinance the Zoning Department shall have the authority to require pre-existing address numbers changed if such address numbers do not conform to the uniform address system detailed in this Ordinance.
15. The GIS Coordinator shall be responsible for maintaining the Uniform Addressing Database. Responsibility includes adding improved parcel additions and making available road database information as requested. The E911 Coordinator shall be responsible for updates to the MSAG (Master Street Address Guide) and shall also be responsible for updating the Buffalo County Dispatch Center GIS data for the E911 mapping system.

#### **4. Address and Signage Requirements for Shared Private Driveways.**

##### **A. Private Driveways Accessing Three or More Principal Structures.**

1. All shared access driveways that have three or more addressed principal structures, as of the date of adoption of this Ordinance, shall be defined as a private drive and shall be named and signed according to regulations set forth in this Ordinance. All principal structures accessing the private drive shall be re-addressed to coincide with the newly named private drive.
2. All affected property owners are equally responsible for all costs associated with replacing private road name signs and for all costs associated with re-addressing.

B. Private Driveways Accessing Two Addresses.

1. A shared access driveway with two existing addresses, as of the date of adoption of this Ordinance, that becomes the driveway access for a third address, shall be defined as a private drive and shall be named and signed according to regulations set forth in this Ordinance. All principal structures accessing the private drive shall be re-addressed to coincide with the newly named private drive.
2. From the date of the adoption of this Ordinance, any driveway over 200 feet in length that accesses a single address and becomes a shared access driveway serving two or more addresses shall be defined as a private drive and shall be named and signed according to the regulations set forth in this Ordinance. All principal structures accessing the private drive shall be re-addressed to coincide with the newly named private drive.
3. In all instances and situations listed in B. 1. and 2. above, the property owner that initiates or causes the private drive to be named and signed is responsible for all costs associated with placing private drive name signs and for all costs associated with re-addressing.
4. Private driveways over ½ mile in length which serve as access to two Dwellings shall be defined as a private drive and shall be named and signed according to regulations set forth in this Ordinance. Both dwellings shall be re-addressed to coincide with the named private drive. Affected property owners are equally responsible for all costs associated with placing private drive name signs and for all cost associated with re-addressing.

C. Applicable to All Private Drives.

1. All road surface maintenance, upkeep, and liability associated with a named private drive shall remain with the respective property owners.
2. In situations where it is not required, property owners are allowed to name and sign their private driveway provided it is over 100 feet in length. All costs associated with signing and readdressing shall be at the property owner's expense.
3. The replacement of private drive signs will be contracted for by the Zoning Department with appropriate fees established and charged to the liable property owner/s.



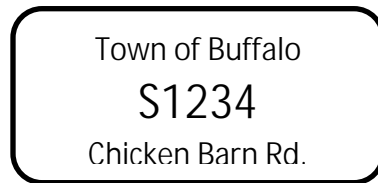
## CHAPTER 3

### ADDRESS SIGN STANDARDS

#### 1. Address Sign Design Specifications and Procurement.

- A. Sign Specifications. Address signs shall be double-sided constructed using a 20 (twenty) inch wide by 8 (eight) inch high aluminum blank upon which is attached a highly reflective adhesive membrane. Address numbers and letters shall be 4 inches high and centered on the sign. The Town name shall be located above the address number and shall be 1 (one) inch in height. The road names shall be located below the address number and shall be 1 (one) inch in height. All above lettering shall be reflective white in color on a blue reflective background.

Example:



- B. Procurement. All address signs will be procured by the Buffalo County Zoning Department.

#### 2. Placement of Address Signs.

- A. Responsibility. All address signs will be installed by the Zoning Department or its designee.
- B. Placement.
1. Signs shall be mounted on a steel signpost driven so that the sign is no less than 42 (forty-two) inches and no more than 54 inches above the ground surface.
  2. Signs shall be mounted so as to be perpendicular to the roadway and highly visible.
  3. Address signs shall be installed on the right-hand side of the driveway, as the driveway is viewed from the public roadway, whenever possible.
  4. Signs shall be located no more than 10 (ten) feet from the road right-of-way and no more than 10 (ten) feet from the driveway.
  5. Mailboxes shall not be used to mount address signs.

### **3. Address Sign Maintenance.**

It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to maintain all installed address signs that pertain to his/her property. Maintenance includes notification to the Zoning Department when in need of replacement, repairs, reinstallation, etc. Maintenance includes keeping signs free of obstructions to visibility such as obscuring vegetation and snow mounds.

### **4. Existing Addresses.**

Addresses that exist at the time of the adoption of this Ordinance but do not meet all provisions of this Ordinance may be allowed to remain if approved by the Zoning Department and the GIS Coordinator. If it is determined that there is a potential risk to life and safety an existing number shall be changed in order to comply with the purpose and provisions of this Ordinance. In all cases when an existing nonconforming address sign needs replacement a new address number shall be assigned and a new sign obtained in compliance with the provisions of this Ordinance. In all cases when a new or replacement sign must be ordered the property owner shall be responsible and liable for all costs incurred.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ROAD NAMING AND SIGN STANDARDS**

#### **1. Road Naming and Signing.**

##### **A. Road Naming.**

1. Each Road shall have 1 (one) and only 1 (one) name. A named road should be essentially continuous without gaps.
2. Road names shall only change when there is a substantial intersection, or at municipal boundaries, not including Town boundaries. Town roads having more than one name shall be renamed according to the requirements of this Ordinance.
3. There shall be no duplicate road names such as Pine Road and Pine Lane.
4. Roads with duplicate names existing at the time of adoption of this Ordinance will require the renaming of one road to eliminate the duplicate.
5. There shall be no similar sounding names such as Beach Road and Beech Road, Main Street and Maine Street, etc.
6. Roads with same or similar sounding names existing at the time of the adoption of this Ordinance shall be allowed to continue in use.
7. Roads shall not be named after a commercial enterprise or a living person.

8. When renaming roads, the road or road section with the most addressed properties along its length, where a road name change would affect a greater number of residents, shall retain its name.
9. When a new road name, a road name change, or a private drive name is sought, the applicable Town or individual shall submit a 'Road Name Approval Application' to the Zoning Department which shall have the authority, in concurrence with the GIS Coordinator and the E911 Coordinator, to accept or reject proposed road names.
10. Road name abbreviations and special characters such as hyphens, apostrophes, periods, and decimals are not permitted.
11. To achieve and maintain the stated purpose and intent of this Ordinance the Zoning Department shall have the authority to require pre-existing road names and road signs to be changed and or removed if such names are incorrect, duplicated and/or cause confusion as to location for emergency and first responders.

## **2. Road & Private Drive Sign Standards and Responsibility.**

### **A. Sign Standards.**

1. **Material.** Signs shall consist of engineer grade highly reflective sheeting on aluminum or other durable metal.
2. **Color.** Town Road signs shall consist of white lettering on a dark green background. Private drive signs shall consist of white lettering on a dark yellow background.
3. **Size.** At minimum use 4 (four) inch letters for the name of the road on a 6 (six) inch flat blade sign blank. At minimum use 2 (two) inch letters for "Road", "Drive", "Trail" etc. and for "Pvt" on all private drive signs.
4. **Visibility.** Signs shall be free of bushes, tree limbs or other obstructions that may inhibit the visibility of the sign. Signs naming all designated private drives shall be installed at the intersection of the private drive with the public road.
5. **Placement.** Signs naming all intersecting public roads shall be installed at all intersections.

### **B. Responsibility.**

1. **Towns.** Each Town in Buffalo County shall insure that all Town roads are properly signed and all signs are placed and maintained at all intersections with other public roads. Towns shall be responsible for maintaining and replacing road name signs upon notification from the Zoning Department or the Buffalo County Sheriff's Department.

2. Costs. The costs associated with road name signs shall be the responsibility of each individual Town.
3. Private Drives. Costs associated with private drive signs shall be the responsibility of the respective landowners and shared equally. In cases of an additional address being located on a private drive, costs of private drive name signs shall be the sole responsibility of that property owner locating the additional address.

### **3. Private Drive Naming.**

#### **A. Naming.**

1. All private drives shall end in “Trail” followed by “Pvt”, indicating a private drive.
2. Private Drives shall only be named after a species of mammal, tree, insect or bird.
3. Private drive names shall be submitted as a consensus of landowners along the private drive being named. Names shall be submitted on a Road Name Approval Application to the Zoning Department.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **PROHIBITIONS, ENFORCEMENT, PROSECUTION and PENALTIES.**

#### **1. Prohibitions.**

##### **A. The following are in violation of this Ordinance and are prohibited:**

1. No person shall vandalize, destroy, damage, cover, obscure, or remove an official address, public road or private drive sign.
2. No person shall relocate an officially placed address sign, public road or private drive sign without the authorization of the Zoning Department.
3. No person shall fail to apply for a replacement address sign after the sign for that persons property has been vandalized, destroyed or removed.
4. No person shall place or install a non-official address sign or road name or private drive sign at or near the location of official signs. Exceptions will be approved in cases where the property owner erects a temporary address sign until such time as the official sign is ordered and installed.
5. It is unlawful for any person or corporation to intentionally refuse to have an address sign or private drive sign installed or replaced.

**2. Enforcement**

It shall be the duty of Buffalo County Zoning Department to enforce the provisions of this Ordinance and investigate complaints and violations of said Ordinance.

**3. Prosecution**

Prosecution for violations of this Ordinance shall proceed as defined in the Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 5, Section 3.

**4. Penalties**

Any person who shall violate any provisions of this Ordinance shall be subject to penalty(s) as provided in the Buffalo County Zoning Ordinance, Chapter 5, Section 4.