Have You Ever Wondered How Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) Work?

Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS), formerly known as Private Sewage Systems, are used in non-sewered areas as a means to treat and recycle domestic wastewater back into the soil.

General Information

The first step in the POWTS installation process is to have a soil test conducted by a licensed certified soil tester to determine a suitable type and size of POWTS for the site. A sanitary permit, applied for by a properly licensed plumber, is required prior to the installation of the POWTS.

1. If properly sited, designed, installed and maintained, a POWTS should last 20+ years.

2. Washington County Sanitary Code requires pumping or inspection of treatment tanks by an individual licensed in the State of Wisconsin as a licensed master plumber, master plumber restricted service, certified POWTS inspector, POWTS maintainer, or certified septage servicing operator, as follows:
   a. At-grade, mound, in-ground pressure system – every 2 years; Conventional system – every 3 years.
   b. Alternative or experimental designs often require more frequent maintenance.

3. The use of septic tank additives is unnecessary for the proper biological function of a POWTS.
How POWTS Work  (continued)

As wastewater exits the house through the building sewer, it enters the septic (treatment) tank. Although the primary function of the tank is to settle out solids, it also provides an environment for biological and chemical reactions to take place. In the tank, larger solids settle forming a sludge layer at the bottom of the tank. Grease, oils, and floating particles rise to the top to form a scum layer. An effluent filter, located at the outlet end of the tank helps to prevent large particles such as seeds, cigarettes, towelettes, hair, etc. from entering the absorption cell (dispersion unit). The partially treated waste discharged from the septic tank is referred to as sewage effluent.

Sewage effluent flows by gravity or is pumped to the absorption cells for treatment within the soil. Within the absorption cells are perforated pipes or chambers which distribute the effluent into the ground. Typical absorption fields include conventional cells, in-ground pressure, at-grade, and mound systems. The size of the absorption cell is dependent on soil permeability and, for residences, the number of bedrooms in the dwelling.

The soil serves as a filter, treating the effluent as it percolates downward. With traditional soil absorption cells, the soil provides most of the treatment and final dispersal into the environment. With the advent of newer technology, pretreatment units such as aerobic treatment units (ATUs) including suspended growth, fixed media, and trickling filter systems provide most of the treatment with the soil providing final polishing and dispersal to the environment.

As the soil absorption system ages, the ability of the soil to absorb effluent diminishes causing it to become saturated. The saturated soil pores become clogged, resulting in ponding within the soil absorption system, and sewage back-up into the house, or surface discharge of partially treated effluent near the system may occur. Although a saturated system will continue to filter sewage effluent, eventually the effluent accumulates in the absorption field faster than the soil can absorb it, resulting in failure. If you have questions relative to a Private On-Site Wastewater Treatment System, please contact a Land Use Inspector in the Land Use Division.
Phase 1 of Eisenbahn State Trail User Survey Complete

Have you taken the Eisenbahn State Trail User survey yet? If you’re a winter trail user, you still can! On July 28, 2008, the Washington County Planning and Parks Department began an eight month survey of trail users on the Washington County segment of the Eisenbahn State Trail. Surveys submitted from July 28, 2008 to October 15, 2008 are included in Phase 1 of the survey report. Phase 2 of the survey, expected to be completed by May 2009, will detail responses provided by winter trail users from mid-October 2008 through March 2009.

The survey is being conducted to identify ways to improve the Eisenbahn State Trail and to assess public opinion regarding future public trails throughout the County. This information will be utilized by the Planning and Parks Department as part of the update to the Park and Open Space Plan for Washington County in 2009.

Phase 1 Survey Methodology

Phase 1 of the survey was conducted at six major access points along the trail. A cooling station was located near the trail at the following intersecting roads as shown on the map on page 4: State Highway 28 in the Village of Kewaskum, County Highway H in the Town of Kewaskum, Lighthouse Lane in the Town of Barton, and State Highway 33, Decorah Road and Paradise Drive in the City of West Bend. All surveys during Phase 1 were distributed using an in-person survey method. Survey participants were able to enter a drawing to win a free round of golf at the Washington County Golf Course.

Congratulations to Andrea Bryant of West Bend, winner of the free round of golf at the Washington County Golf Course!

See pages 4 through 6 for more information regarding the survey and Phase 1 results.

For a copy of the full Phase 1 report, please visit the Planning Division’s page on Washington County’s website: www.co.washington.wi.us.
The following results detail the responses provided by summer and fall users of the Eisenbahn State Trail. The following information was derived from the 582 surveys that were submitted from July 28, 2008 to October 15, 2008.

- The majority (90.2%) of survey respondents reside in Washington County.
- The most popular activity by respondents was biking (85.4%).
- 106 (18.2%) respondents indicated their primary trail activities as commuting to shop, work or school.
- The majority of respondents, 76.1%, indicated they used the trail at least once a week.
- 44.2% indicated they generally use the trail for one to two hours.
- 53.8% of respondents reported that they had purchased at least one item in the past year because of the trail - the most frequent responses were bikes and bike supplies.
- Of the 310 respondents who identified a price range to reflect how much money they spent on those items in the past year, 113 (36.5%) reported spending more than $250.00 on trail related items.
- The majority of respondents (92.5%) rated the maintenance of the trail as either “excellent” (57.6%) or “good” (34.9%).
- The cleanliness of the trail was rated as “excellent” or “good” by 90.2% of respondents.
- 87.0% of respondents reported that safety and security along the trail was either “excellent” (41.8%) or “good” (45.2%).
- About half (50.9%) of all survey respondents were willing to pay an annual use fee to help maintain the trail.
- The majority of trail use occurred on the paved portions of the trail.
- When asked about future trails, 29.3% of respondents indicated the trail should be extended to the south, connecting it to the Village of Jackson, 13.4% reported that the trail should be expanded further south to the Town of Germantown, 9.4% reported that the trail should be expanded further south to Highway 167, and 7.0% wanted expansion further south to Waukesha County.
Even if you didn’t get a chance to take the survey in the summer but passed by a survey station, you were included in a count to determine overall trail use. In addition to the in-person survey, a trail user count was taken of all trail users. The count was conducted at all six survey stations. A total of 2,312 people were counted, including those who filled out a survey and those who did not. If a person passed by more than once, he or she was counted each time they passed by.

- 76% of trail users passed by on bikes making biking the most frequent trail activity.
- 12% of trail users were walking without a pet making it the second most frequent activity.

Overall trail use was relatively constant on weekends and weekdays except at the Highway H survey station. The Highway H survey station had about double the use on weekends than on weekdays.

Of the six locations where the trail user count was conducted, the busiest location on any given day was at Highway 33 between the hours of 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. Highway 33 and Decorah Road were also busy locations between the hours of 5 p.m. and 7 p.m.

If you are a winter trail user, you can obtain a survey from 1 of 4 survey boxes located along the trail and mail completed forms to the Planning and Parks Department. Phase 2 of the survey, expected to be completed by May 2009, will detail responses provided by winter trail users from mid-October 2008 through March 2009.

A survey box is located at the following four locations:

- Intersection of trail and Highway 28 (Main Street) in the Village of Kewaskum
- Intersection of trail and Sandy Ridge Road (southern intersection) in the Town of Barton
- Intersection of Highway 33 (Washington Street) in the City of West Bend
- A bridge less than a quarter-mile north of Paradise Drive in the City of West Bend
Town of Hartford

If you are a resident of the Town of Hartford, are you familiar with the Town’s comprehensive plan? The Town held an open house on December 3, 2008. The Town conducted a public hearing on February 16, 2009. The Town Plan Commission is scheduled to consider plan approval on April 1, 2009. The Town Board will consider plan adoption on April 13, 2009.

To view the Town of Hartford’s comprehensive plan draft chapters, visit Washington County’s website at: www.co.washington.wi.us/smartgrowth. Copies of the plan are also available at the Hartford Town Hall. Your input is still encouraged.

Town of Wayne

If you are a resident of the Town of Wayne, did you attend the open house on December 11, 2008? The open house included a variety of maps, fact sheets and display boards. County, Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission (SEWRPC) and UW-Extension staff were present to help residents become familiar with the plan. The Town has scheduled a public hearing for March 17, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. at the Wayne Town Hall, so please attend and provide your input on the plan.

To view the Town of Wayne’s comprehensive plan draft chapters, visit Washington County’s website at: www.co.washington.wi.us/smartgrowth. Copies of the plan are also available at the Wayne Town Hall.

Town of Addison

If you are a resident of the Town of Addison, you may have attended the open house on February 12, 2009. The open house included a variety of maps, fact sheets and display boards. County SEWRPC and UW-Extension staff were present to help residents become familiar with the plan. A public hearing date has not yet been determined.

To view the Town of Addison’s comprehensive plan draft chapters, visit the Town’s website at: www.tn.addison.wi.gov. Copies of the plan are also available at the Addison Town Hall. You are encouraged to review the plan and provide input.
Town of Addison Visioning Statement

“In 2035, the Town of Addison is a vital and vibrant ‘place.’ It is a community where people enjoy living, where good development decisions add jobs and broaden the tax base. Growth concentrated in designated areas preserves farmland and open space enhances the community’s identity. Great schools, easy access to transportation options, and appropriate infrastructure improvements help to maintain and enhance the quality of life.”

Town of Addison Overall Goals (a sample)

- Preserve suitable land areas for agricultural uses and to reduce conflict with development and the inefficiencies of urban sprawl.
- Minimize the despoiling of environmentally sensitive areas.
- Protect the aesthetic value of the unique Kettle Moraine topography.
- Maintain open space within and around development.
- Allow existing extractive operations (quarries) to continue with limited ability to expand. Continuation, or when permitted, expansion, of extractive land uses must not detract from the rural character of the Town, degrade the natural resource base, disrupt traffic flow, or pose safety concerns.
- Encourage preservation of historic or cultural structures and archaeological sites.
- Assure the availability of safe and affordable housing for residents and allocate sufficient land area to accommodate current and future populations.
- Preserve the village atmosphere and economic importance of downtown Allenton.
- Provide for diversified, balanced, environmentally compatible business development that will offer a variety of goods and services through conveniently located, well-designed business clusters while providing the Town of Addison with a net revenue surplus, provide needed services for Town residents, and limited employment opportunities for its labor force.
- Continue to maintain and improve Town roads in a timely and well-planned manner.
- Continue to provide quality emergency services for Town residents and businesses.
- Continue to provide utilities and community facilities appropriate for a rural town.
- Strive for intergovernmental cooperation with neighboring communities.
- Ensure the Town of Addison’s comprehensive plan remains relevant.

If you would like to view the Town’s comprehensive plan, please visit the Town’s website: www.tn.addison.wi.gov. Copies of the plan are also available at the Town Hall.

Contact Information: Joshua Glass, Planner (262) 335-4445 or Ellen Wolf, Town Clerk (262) 629-5420
As required by law, a public hearing will be conducted prior to plan adoption offering you another opportunity to provide input regarding the comprehensive plan. The date of the public hearing is yet to be determined.

NOTE:
The “Town of Addison Land Use Map: 2035” shown above is in draft form and was the latest version available at the time this newsletter was published reflecting changes of 01/16/09. This map has not yet been adopted by the Town and changes may still be made.
Land & Water Conservation Division

Tips for Managing Your Stormwater Basin

Because stormwater basins are now a standard part of any new residential, commercial, or industrial development within Washington County, we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of basins placed throughout the county landscape over the last 20 years. The following information helps you to identify a stormwater basin, their functions and maintenance requirements for improving our water quality resources.

There are two commonly used basin types: Wet Detention Basins (designed with a permanent pool of water), and Infiltration Basins (designed to infiltrate a certain percentage of stormwater runoff from a development). Basins are constructed to improve both the quality of the stormwater running off a developed site and to limit the quantity of stormwater leaving the site. To accomplish these two very important goals, it is crucial that these basins are maintained to function effectively.

**Typical Design Specifications for ...**

**Wet Basins include:**
- Permanent pool 3-5 ft. deep
- Safety shelf for safety and to promote plant growth
- Outlet structure with multiple levels for various storm sizes

**Infiltration Basins include:**
- Large relatively flat bottoms
- Infiltration trench or piping (site dependant)
- Average 2 ft. depth, raised outlet pipe or emergency spillway
- Native grasses in basin area (recommended)
Stormwater Basins (cont.)...

There are several tasks that you can assist with to ensure the basins perform as intended:

- Monthly removal of trash or other debris around the basin or around the ends of the pipe that exits the basin. Check for and repair eroded areas around the basin or in the swales and ditches around the development.

- Annual removal of trees or undesirable woody plants around the top or inside of the basin. Aquatic plant removal (if needed) often requires the equipment and expertise of a professional. Infiltration basins, in particular, should be kept clear of any vehicular traffic, trees, and undesirable woody plants. If the infiltration basins begin to hold water long enough to kill all vegetation, deep tillage should be implemented or the sediment removed.

- Removal of sediment within a Wet Detention Basin will most likely need to be completed every 10 years; and also require hiring a professional and obtaining permits or approvals from your municipality or county. Determinations for the need for sediment removal will be made by a representative of the government agency that oversees the community’s Erosion Control and Stormwater Management (ECSM) Ordinance.

Prior to conducting any maintenance work on a stormwater basin, please contact your homeowners association or the administering authority that oversees the municipalities ECSM ordinance to determine ownership of the basin and financial responsibilities for any major maintenance activity for the basin. For most developments, a Stormwater Management Maintenance Agreement has been recorded in the Washington County Register of Deeds office. This agreement details financial obligations and maintenance responsibilities to ensure all stormwater facilities are functioning properly.

Along with direct basin maintenance, you can indirectly reduce the need for maintenance of the basin and improve the quality of the water that leaves the basin. Simple steps such as limiting fertilizer use (especially phosphorus based fertilizers) can reduce algae growth in wet basins. Other easy items include directing downspouts to your lawn areas, limiting pesticide use, promptly removing pet waste, recycling oil, repairing car leaks, disposing of toxic wastes properly, and washing your vehicles on your lawn or at the car wash.

**Remember: It is much more efficient to keep the stormwater clean, than it is to clean the stormwater.**

In 2009, the Land & Water Conservation Division staff will be conducting maintenance inspections of stormwater basins installed prior to 1997. If you see us in the field feel free to discuss stormwater basin management with us, or contact the office for additional information: 262.335.4800.
Buffer Strips – Your Common Sense Approach to Conservation

Sediments, nutrients and other forms of nonpoint pollution are the number one threat to our streams, rivers, wetlands and lakes. This can be attributed to the conversion of sensitive shoreland areas from protective natural vegetation to buildings, farm fields, parking lots and manicured lawns. Controlling nonpoint pollution is essential to restoring our county shoreland areas, and in so doing, protect our waterbodies. So how can you make a difference? Buffers provide an immense environmental benefit; the low installation and maintenance costs make buffers a true common sense approach to conservation.

Buffer strips are narrow strips of land planted and maintained in natural grasses and other vegetation. Established along streams and lakes and other areas prone to erosion, buffers work by slowing down runoff and trapping sediment and other pollutants. They also capture and use excess fertilizer that would otherwise pollute surface or groundwater. Filter strips, riparian buffers, field borders, grassed waterways, vegetative buffers and contour grass strips are all different types of conservation buffers. In urban and residential settings, they preserve the natural beauty of the shoreline and provide an alternative to heavily fertilized lawns. On farms, buffers create an effective barrier between a field and nearby waterway. Research shows that a 35-45 ft. wide grass buffer can remove up to 95% of the sediment in farm field runoff.

There are many programs and efforts underway to promote the preservation and restoration of these critical strips of land. Washington County’s shoreland-zoning ordinance was revised to address problems in urbanizing areas by requiring developers to maintain areas of natural vegetation along their shorelines. To address agricultural runoff there are several programs available that offer technical and financial assistance. A new statewide agricultural standard is pending that could require farmers to install buffers or adopt other management practices that reduce sedimentation from their cropland along streams and other waterbodies. Whether urban or rural, farm or non-farm, all riparian landowners play a key role in maintaining the environmental quality of our water resources.

Establishing a Buffer – Are there Cash Incentives?

Taking sensitive acres out of production to establish a conservation cover makes good sense and now monetary incentives are also available to help you establish a buffer. If you own land in wetlands and/or adjacent to streams, the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) may be just what you need!

Conservation buffers can vary in width to accommodate straight field edges. Rental rates for CRP buffers vary depending on the soil types present and typically average $80/acre. In addition to the annual rental payment, landowners can receive cost sharing to establish buffers. This may include cost sharing for seeding, fencing, watering facilities and stream crossings if cattle are present. Landowners will also receive an up-front signing incentive up to $100/acre.

In addition to CRP, there are several state and county buffer initiatives underway that offer financial incentives with varying degrees of maintenance requirements. To review programs and to identify a buffer that best fits your needs, please contact our office at: 262.335.4800.
County Landowners Learn More About Their Woodland Plant Communities

Washington and Ozaukee County neighbors recently gathered for a one-day educational workshop held at Riveredge Nature Center in Newburg.

Experts representing the Natural Resources Conservation Service, University of Wisconsin Extension, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Washington and Ozaukee County Government, Riveredge Nature Center, and Town and Country Resource Conservation & Development provided information on a variety of topics including:

- Tree identification
- Tree diseases
- Common woodland invasive plants and invasive insects
- Selective harvesting
- Wildlife habitat management
- Woodland management cost-share programs

This was the first educational woodland event for nearly all participants, and future workshops including additional topics are planned. Please contact the Land and Water Conservation Division at 262.335.4802 if you would like to be added to the workshop mailing list.

Fenceline Conversations - by Paul Sebo, Senior Technician

In my last article “Continuing Your Conservation Obligation” (December 2008, Volume III, Issue #4) I concluded by asking a question: Are there additional conservation practices that you could or should be implementing on your farm?

How about a Riparian Buffer? A Riparian Buffer is a narrow strip of land planted to grass, trees or shrubs along streams, ditches, wetlands or other water bodies. These types of buffers trap sediment, filter nutrients, and provide habitat for wildlife.

A buffer is the least costly and most effective conservation practice that can be installed on the land. To a lesser extent even a 20-30 foot wide buffer can effectively remove 70-80% of sediment and nutrients from upland runoff. A 30 foot wide buffer that is one half mile long equates to a mere 1.8 acres of land. The buffer area is not necessarily lost for production because buffers require maintenance and the ideal method to maintain a buffer is mowing. If the buffer is planted to grasses, these grasses can be harvested for livestock or horse feed. No productive land is lost while incorporating one of the most effective conservation practices on your farm. A buffer is a win-win effort for conservation and for your farm.
Water Test Kits Available (for Private Wells) at the Washington County Land & Water Conservation Division
Cost is $3.25 - Additional $41.00 Lab Fee is Required

Did You Know that Your Well Water is Actually Groundwater?

Groundwater is water that occupies void spaces between soil particles or cracks in rock below the land surface. It is a local resource that originates as precipitation which infiltrates into the ground. The type of soil and bedrock that a well is drilled into often determines water’s pH, saturation index or the amount of hardness or alkalinity in water. Types of soil and bedrock in a region also determines how quickly contaminants reach the groundwater.

8 Tests Provided to Determine Your Drinking Water Quality:

Bacteria – Coliform
Hardness
Alkalinity
Conductivity
pH
Saturation Index
Nitrates
Chloride

Land & Water Conservation Division

Bring Conservation from the Countryside to your Back Yard

Whether your yard is measured in acres or feet, you can give it a conservation facelift this spring through our annual county native tree and plant sale program. Add beauty and diversity by planting native trees, shrubs and various prairie seed mixes. Attract wildlife to your new plantings by providing bluebird, butterfly, and bat houses. Protect soil and water resources by installing a compost bin and utilizing soil and well water test kits. Order forms are available in the Land and Water Office and on the web at: www.co.washington.wi.us/lcd

It’s important to note that although the trees and shrubs are only offered once throughout the year, prairie seed, compost bins, houses, soil and well water test kits are available year-round. Guides to help you implement backyard conservation, rain gardens or other conservation practices are offered by the Land and Water Conservation Division.
A Prescription for
Clean Water & Safe Kids
FREE Medicine Collection Day
for Washington County Residents
April 18, 2009 (Saturday)
9:00 am – 1:00 pm
St. Joseph’s Hospital Campus
3200 Pleasant Valley Rd., West Bend, WI
Confidential Drive-thru Service

You can help protect Washington County’s waterways, prevent accidental poisonings and reduce substance abuse. Bring your expired and unused medicine in the original container (if possible) to this special event Medicine Collection Day. Never flush or pour unused medicine down the drain. Wastewater treatment plants are not designed to remove all medications from wastewater.

Acceptable items: Prescription and over the counter medication (ointments, sprays, pills, liquids, inhalers, creams, vials, vitamins/supplements and pet medications)

Unacceptable items: Illegal drugs, bio-hazardous materials, needles/sharps, household hazardous waste, medical equipment, personal care products (shampoo, soaps, lotions, sunscreens, etc.)

West Bend Sewer Utility – Scott Tutas (262.334.3925)
Washington County Health Department – Paula Mugan (262.335.4462)
Washington County Sheriff’s Department – Detective Mark Sette (262.335.4395)

7th Annual Nutrient Management Workshop Held - Jan. 22 & 29, 2009

The Division staff recently held the annual Nutrient Management Workshop. Landowners learned more about their crop needs, qualifying them to develop nutrient management plans for their farms. Washington County, UWEX and Discovery Farm staff assisted 14 farms with the Department of Agriculture, Trade & Consumer Protection approved certification course. If you would like to find out how you can get certified or need assistance with nutrient management, contact a Land & Water Conservation Division technician.

Stephanie Hofmann,
Project Technician,
Certified Crop Advisor
262.335.4804

Paul Backhaus,
Project Technician,
Certified Crop Advisor
262.335.4803

Paul Sebo,
Senior Project Technician
262.335.4805
Dripper’s Conservation Tip - Use Your Appliances Efficiently

- Set your refrigerator temperature at 38 to 42 degrees Fahrenheit; your freezer should be set between 0 and 5 degrees Fahrenheit. Use the power-save switch if your fridge has one, and make sure the door seals tightly. You can check this by making sure that a dollar bill closed in between the door gaskets is difficult to pull out. If it slides easily between the gaskets, replace them.

- Don’t preheat or "peek" inside the oven more than necessary. Check the seal on the oven door, and use a microwave oven for cooking or reheating small items.

- Wash only full loads in your dishwasher, using short cycles for all but the dirtiest dishes. This saves water and the energy used to pump and heat it. Air-drying, if you have the time, can also reduce energy use.

- In your clothes washer, set the appropriate water level for the size of the load; wash in cold water when practical, and always rinse in cold.

- Clean the lint filter in the dryer after each use. Dry heavy and light fabrics separately and don’t add wet items to a load that’s already partly dry. If available, use the moisture sensor setting. (A clothesline is the most energy-efficient clothes dryer of all!)

2009 Sand Lake Conservation Camp

Do you know someone ready for outdoor adventures and summer fun? The 2009 Sand Lake Conservation Camp will be held at Camp Bird near Crivitz, Wisconsin this summer from June 25-27, 2009. Youth from Wisconsin and Michigan’s Upper Peninsula entering grades 6-8 in the fall are invited to participate. The fee is $50* for the three day camp and includes room, board, and program related activities. Early registration cut off is June 6, 2009.

Conservation camp programs cover a wide variety of topics and hands-on experiences, including wildlife habitat, water quality, fisheries, forestry, orienteering, and canoeing. Natural resource and education professionals teach the programs, serve as counselors, and give campers an inside look at a variety of careers available in natural resources and the environment. Planned activities and programs also give campers the opportunity to enjoy Camp Bird’s beautiful surroundings, make new friends, and have positive outdoor experiences.

The Land & Water Conservation Division (LWCD) is offering 4 scholarships to students who live or attend school within Washington County. Information is found online under: www.co.washington.wi.us/lcd - Click on Conservation Education and scroll down to Conservation Camp or call the LWCD @ 262.335.4800. Camp sponsors include Washington County Land & Water Conservation Division, Marinette County Land & Water Conservation, UW-Extension, Parks/Forestry/Outdoor Recreation Division, WI Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. *$65 fee registering June 7th-17th.
Windbreaks are often used to reduce soil erosion, prevent wind damage to your homestead, provide shelter and improve areas for wildlife, protect your crops and orchards, increase the natural beauty of your property, and function as natural snow fences. Trees and shrubs planted as windbreaks can also conserve energy and help reduce noise and dust. Here are some questions to consider when planning your windbreak:

**How do you choose an effective location of your windbreak?**
Our local winds tend to come from the Northwest, but this may vary depending on your location. A windbreak should be located so that it’s at a right angle to the prevailing winds, or as near as possible to a right angle. The windbreak should preferably be located about 100 feet from the house. At this distance trees 35 feet or more should break and lift the wind currents over the top of your home. Be aware of drifting snow that may be a problem if the windbreak is planted too close to the driveway or other structure that it is intended to protect. If possible, the windbreak should extend fifty feet beyond the length of the area you want to protect. If you must have gaps in your windbreak to accommodate paths, driveways, etc., try to make the crossings at tilted angles so you don’t create your own sort of “wind tunnel.”

**Do you have enough space for a windbreak? How many rows should you plant?**
The most effective windbreak has at least 3 rows of evergreen trees, but a single row will still be useful. Including a row of shrubs can be helpful too. Plan your planting to eventually accommodate the full adult size of the trees and/or shrubs you choose for your windbreak.

**What species are best adapted to your geographic area and specific situation?**
White spruce, eastern red cedar, northern white cedar, dogwood and viburnum make good choices to plant for the outside or windward side because they maintain their lower limbs at maturity. For the inside rows, you should consider species like red pine, white pine, and native cedar or spruce. Shrubs to consider that are good for wildlife are American cranberry, nannyberry, ninebark, and silky dogwood.

**Is sufficient water available?**
The first few growing seasons are crucial for any new tree and shrub planting. You will want to have a method by which you can water the windbreak during dry periods to ensure success.

Please contact your local NRCS or DNR office to gain more information regarding a plan for your windbreak.
Golf & Parks Division

Golf Course Cold Storage Building Finished

The cold storage building which has been under construction since August at the Washington County Golf Course has been completed. Golf Course crews have already moved the turf fleet (over 50 pieces of equipment) inside the new 10,000 sq. ft. building for the winter. The new all steel building is insulated, heated and has 20 ft. wide roll-up doors at each end to allow easy entry for the wider rough mowers. All the mowers, tractors, and sprayers are stored on the ground floor. Small tee and green supplies (flags, ball washers, signs, and etc.) are stored in the upper level that provides over 2,200 sq. ft. of additional storage. Insurance covered all costs involved in design and construction of the building. Total cost of the project was slightly over $463,000.

In December, just before freeze up, the original barn site was shaped and seeded and should blend in nicely with the nearby golf holes.

Golf Course Clubhouse News

To better serve our golf course customers, a new version of the Golf Shop Point of Sale computer software was installed on all the clubhouse computers this past February. The new software will process credit card sales and tee time reservations more quickly and will provide an updated and more reliable system that will facilitate customer transactions. As a bonus we will have access to more business and marketing tools.

Renovations that include a new counter, sinks and mirrors are underway in the men’s bathroom and upgrades to the doors between the Golf Shop and the grill room will improve the security and appearance of the Clubhouse. All repairs are being done by Golf Course staff and will be finished well before we open in late March or early April.

Springtime Expectations

If you have cabin fever after this long, cold winter and are hungry for some color, natural areas along the hiking trails in our County Parks may have the cure for you. April and May bring all kinds of native plants pushing up through the leaf litter to put on a dazzling show for you to see! Below are some of the spring flowers that were photographed blooming the first week of May 2008, at Lizard Mound County Park.

From left to right
Hepatica,
Large Flowered Bellwort & Spring Beauty
2009 Boat Launch Fees

Thinking about getting your boat out of storage for spring fishing? You will be happy to know that the 2009 Washington County boat launch fees have not increased for this year. The Washington County Park System daily boat launch fee remains at $8.00 and the annual boat launch fee remains at $80.00 for the 2009 season. The annual sticker can be purchased at the boat launch sites at Ackerman’s Grove or Henschke Hillside County Parks or at the Planning and Parks Department office located in the Public Agency Center in West Bend. The annual sticker is not transferable. The daily launch permit can be purchased at the launch sites and allows unlimited launches on the date of purchase. A third boat launch is available at Leonard J. Yahr County Park located in the Town of Farmington; however only carry-in launches are allowed at this site. All carry-in launches at Ackerman’s Grove, Henschke Hillside, and Leonard J. Yahr County Park’s are at no charge.

2009 Heritage Trails County Park Disc Golf Fees

Considering the economic times is your family looking for a fun and inexpensive outdoor activity? Bring a picnic lunch and play disc golf at Heritage Trails County Park. The 2009 fees are the same as 2008. The 2009 annual and daily fees for the 18 hole disc golf course are $40.00 for an annual pass that allows unlimited play during the season and $4.00 for 18 holes or unlimited daily play and $2.00 for 9 holes. The disc golf course is located at Heritage Trails County Park on County E, (South of Hwy. 60 and West of Hwy. 164) and is open from April 1st to November 15th.

Tree Planting at Leonard J. Yahr County Park

Do you remember when there was an orchard at the entrance of what is now Leonard J. Yahr County Park? The orchard was removed before the park was developed because the trees were either diseased or damaged.

In November of 2008, Washington County Park crews planted 30 disease resistant flowering crab trees inside the fence line along Orchard Valley Road to give the entrance to the park the look of an orchard once again. This spring be sure to visit the park to see the trees when they are all in bloom!
**Planning & Parks Department Newsletter** is published quarterly for Washington County residents. Viewpoints of authors do not necessarily reflect those of the Planning, Conservation and Parks Committee or the Washington County Board of Supervisors. The Planning, Conservation and Parks Committee and the Planning and Parks Department staff encourage responses from the public.

Planning & Parks Department Mission Statement:
The public is provided with recreational benefits, environmental protection and increased awareness, compliance with regulations, vibrant local economy, sensible growth and an improved quality of life in Washington County.

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**Riveredge Speaks Out - Lecture Series:** March 12 - April 1 - October 1 - November 12
Four lectures on various topics will be held at the Washington County Public Agency Center in West Bend - Rooms 1113A/B @ 7:00 p.m. - visit www.riveredge.us for additional info. and other lectures offered in 2009.

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