

WISCONSIN FUND INFORMATIONAL LETTER

Thank you for your interest in the Wisconsin Fund Program. The following information is intended to make you more aware of the program benefits and requirements, as well as assist you in determining whether you would qualify and wish to participate in the program. Should you have any questions about the Wisconsin Fund Program after reading through this material, please contact us at 920-683-4185 between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

1. What is the Wisconsin Fund?

The Wisconsin Fund is a State funded grant program designed to assist in the financing of correcting pollution problems caused by individual private sewage systems. The fund helps citizens of participating counties defray the cost of replacing or rehabilitating existing failing private sewage systems.

2. Who is eligible and how much money is available?

If you are the principal owner occupant of a private residence or the owner of a small commercial establishment, you may be eligible if you meet all the eligibility criteria. Accompanying this letter is a complete list of eligibility requirements for participating in the fund. Read through them carefully to determine your eligibility status. Those who may be eligible to participate could receive up to a maximum of \$7,000 to defray the cost of rehabilitating or replacing their private sewage systems.

3. How does the program work?

A failing private sewage system would be brought to the attention of the Manitowoc County Planning and Zoning Department either by citizen complaint or voluntarily by the owner. If the Manitowoc County Planning and Zoning Department verifies the system is failing as per s.144.245 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, an enforcement order would be written to the owner to correct the failing system. The correction of the failing private sewage system may require the installation of a conventional, in-ground pressure, mound or holding tank system or the repair of the septic tank and/or soil absorption area. Once the order is written, the owner is required to correct the failing system with or without Wisconsin Fund assistance within one year's time. The owner must contact a certified soil tester to conduct a soil/percolation test and a master plumber to obtain a sanitary permit. Once the sanitary permit has been issued, the owner is eligible to participate in the program. The owner must then complete the application forms and submit them to the Manitowoc County Planning and Zoning Department with a \$100.00 application fee.

The Planning and Zoning Department will compile all applications received between February 1 and January 31 of the following year and submit them to the Department of Commerce who administers the fund. The Department of Commerce reviews the applications received statewide and allocates a portion of the money available to each county based on the county's number of applications. Manitowoc County will then distribute the money to the eligible individuals. (Note that the system **must** be installed and paid for in full prior to receiving money).

4. How soon after applying can an applicant expect any money?

This question is very difficult to answer since the answer is based on how much money is available in the State budget for the program and how many applications are received statewide. An applicant may expect payment in the current application year, in early fall of the year following the January deadline which the applications were sent in. If state funds are not sufficient to fully fund all applications up to full eligible amount, the Department of Commerce is required to pro-rate grants according to the category of failing private sewage system. Applications for category 1 systems must be funded before any category 2 applications are funded. If funds are insufficient to fully fund all category 1 applications, category 1 applications receive a pro-rated grant and category 2 applications are not funded. (See eligibility requirements for definitions of category 1, 2, and 3 failing systems).

5. What is the next step if an owner wants to apply for a grant?

The owner should contact the Manitowoc County Planning and Zoning Department and/or stop in the office to obtain the application forms. Personnel from the Planning and Zoning Department can then visit the site in question and verify system failure (see eligibility requirements). If the system failure is verified, the applicant will receive a written order to correct the failing systems.

NOTE: After the order is issued, the owner must correct the failing system within one year even if he does not wish to participate in the fund or is ineligible for any reason to receive a grant.

CORRECTION ORDERS MUST BE ISSUED OR DETERMINATION OF FAILURE MADE PRIOR TO INSTALLATION OR REHABILITATION OF THE EXISTING PRIVATE SEWAGE SYSTEM.