



# WISCONSIN FUND

## GUIDELINES & PROCEDURES FOR FISCAL 2011

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**WHAT IS THE WISCONSIN FUND?** The Wisconsin Fund, or Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment System Replacement or Rehabilitation Financial Assistance Program, was created in 1978 by the State of Wisconsin to encourage the replacement or rehabilitation of failed Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) by making state funds available to the owners of failing POWTS. The program gives preference to failing POWTS posing the greatest threat to groundwater and surface water resources and to applicants with incomes falling below specified limits. Green Lake County has participated in the Wisconsin Fund program since 1984. Additional information on the Wisconsin Fund program is available from the Green Lake County Code Enforcement Office. The complete rules for the program are contained in ch. COMM 87, Wisconsin Administrative Code and in s. 145.245, Wisconsin Statutes.

**WHAT IS FISCAL 2011?** Wisconsin Fund applications received on or before **January 29, 2010** are processed for awards disbursed during the fiscal 2011 budget year that begins on July 1, 2010.

**WHAT IS A POWTS?** A Private Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems (POWTS) is a system employing biological and mechanical processes to remove the viruses, bacteria, and other contaminants contained in the wastewater discharged from a dwelling or public building. The most common POWTS in use in Green Lake County include: conventional seepage trenches and beds; seepage pits; mound systems; and at-grade systems. Holding tanks are also regulated as POWTS.

**WHAT IS A FAILING POWTS?** Section 145.245(4), Wisconsin Statutes, defines a failing POWTS as one which causes or results in any of the following conditions:

- Category 1 - The discharge of sewage to surface water, groundwater, drain tiles, bedrock, or zones of seasonally saturated soil. Failures in this category pose the greatest threat to the environment and receive priority status.
- Category 2 – The discharge of sewage to the surface of the ground. Failures in this category are eligible for funding, but receive lower priority. **Update: Category 2 failures have not been funded in the last five years.**
- Category 3 – The backup of sewage into the structure served by the POWTS. Failures in this category are not eligible for funding.

**WHO CAN APPLY?** The following conditions may qualify an applicant as **eligible** for financial assistance:

- The failure of your POWTS has been verified by the Code Enforcement Office as a Category 1 or 2 failure. The failure must be verified prior to any work being performed to correct the failing POWTS.
- Your application is received by this office within 3 years of the verification of failure.
- Your annual household income is **less than \$45,000**. Household income is based on the total combined adjusted gross income of all owners and spouses, as computed on your Federal Income Tax Return for either the year prior to or during which the order to correct the failing POWTS was issued.
- If your annual household income is greater than \$32,000 your eligible grant amount will be reduced by 30¢ for every dollar that your income exceeds \$32,000.
- Your commercial establishment (or farm) must have an annual gross revenue less than \$362,500 and a total wastewater flow less than 5,000 gallons per day.
- The failing POWTS was installed **prior to July 1, 1978**.
- Your principal residence or small commercial establishment is not located in an area served by public sewer.
- For your dwelling to qualify as your principal residence, you must occupy it at least 51% of the year.

**WHO CANNOT APPLY?** The following conditions will render an applicant **ineligible** for a grant:

- Your system is failing solely due to a Category 3 failure.
- Your household income is **greater than \$45,000**.
- Your commercial establishment or farm's gross revenue is **greater than \$362,500** or the total wastewater flow is greater than 5,000 gallons per day.
- Your failing POWTS serves a seasonal home, rental property or a government owned structure.
- Your failing POWTS was installed on or after **July 1, 1978**.
- Your failing POWTS is a pit or vault type privy.
- Your dwelling or building is located in an area where public sewer is available.
- Work was performed to correct the failing POWTS prior to verification of failure by the Code Enforcement Office.
- Financial assistance from the Wisconsin Fund program has been awarded or denied your property in the past.

#### **HOW DOES THE APPLICATION PROCESS WORK?**

- Contact the Code Enforcement Office at (920) 294-4028 and arrange an inspection to verify the failure of the POWTS. In order for you to be eligible for a grant this office must issue an order condemning the old system.
- Contact a licensed soil tester and POWTS installer. These professionals will assist you in determining what type of replacement POWTS is suitable for your property and where it will best be located. The installer will assist you in obtaining a Sanitary Permit from this office for the replacement POWTS. In order for you to file a grant application, a sanitary permit must be issued by **January 29, 2010**.
- Complete Part A of the Wisconsin Fund Owner's Application and submit it to this office by **January 29, 2010**. Assistance completing an application is available from this office.
- Submit copies of your Federal Income Tax Return as proof of income to this office by **January 29, 2010**. You may submit your tax return for either the year in which the order to correct the failing POWTS was issued or for the year prior. Tax returns must be signed by all persons listed on the return. If you did not file a tax return this office can assist you in preparing alternate evidence of income.
- Submit \$100.00 application fee payable to "Green Lake County" to this office by **January 29, 2010**.
- Once you have completed the Owner's Application it is best to make an appointment with this office to review your application.
- Submit proof of payment for the soil test and installation of the new POWTS to this office after completion of all work. Proof of payment must be in the form of paid invoices/receipts and cancelled checks/money orders.
- Installation of the new POWTS must be completed and proof of payment submitted prior to award disbursement.
- This office will disburse approved awards during the 2010 fiscal year (**after July 1, 2010**). Awards are typically available for disbursement in mid-to late August. However, it is not unusual for availability to be delayed into September or October.

**PRIVACY?** Wisconsin Fund files are kept separate from general land use files. This office to establish grant eligibility under the guidelines prescribed in ch. COMM 87, Wisconsin Administrative Code, only uses information submitted with grant applications. However, under s. 19.35, Wisconsin Statutes, any person has a right to inspect these records and Green Lake County cannot deny access upon reasonable request.

**WHO COORDINATES THE WISCONSIN FUND PROGRAM FOR GREEN LAKE COUNTY?** Questions about Wisconsin Fund application procedures or on how to obtain a Green Lake County Sanitary Permit should be directed to the Green Lake County Code Enforcement Office at (920) 294-4028.