

Wisconsin Towns Association

July 2026



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Shawano, WI 54166

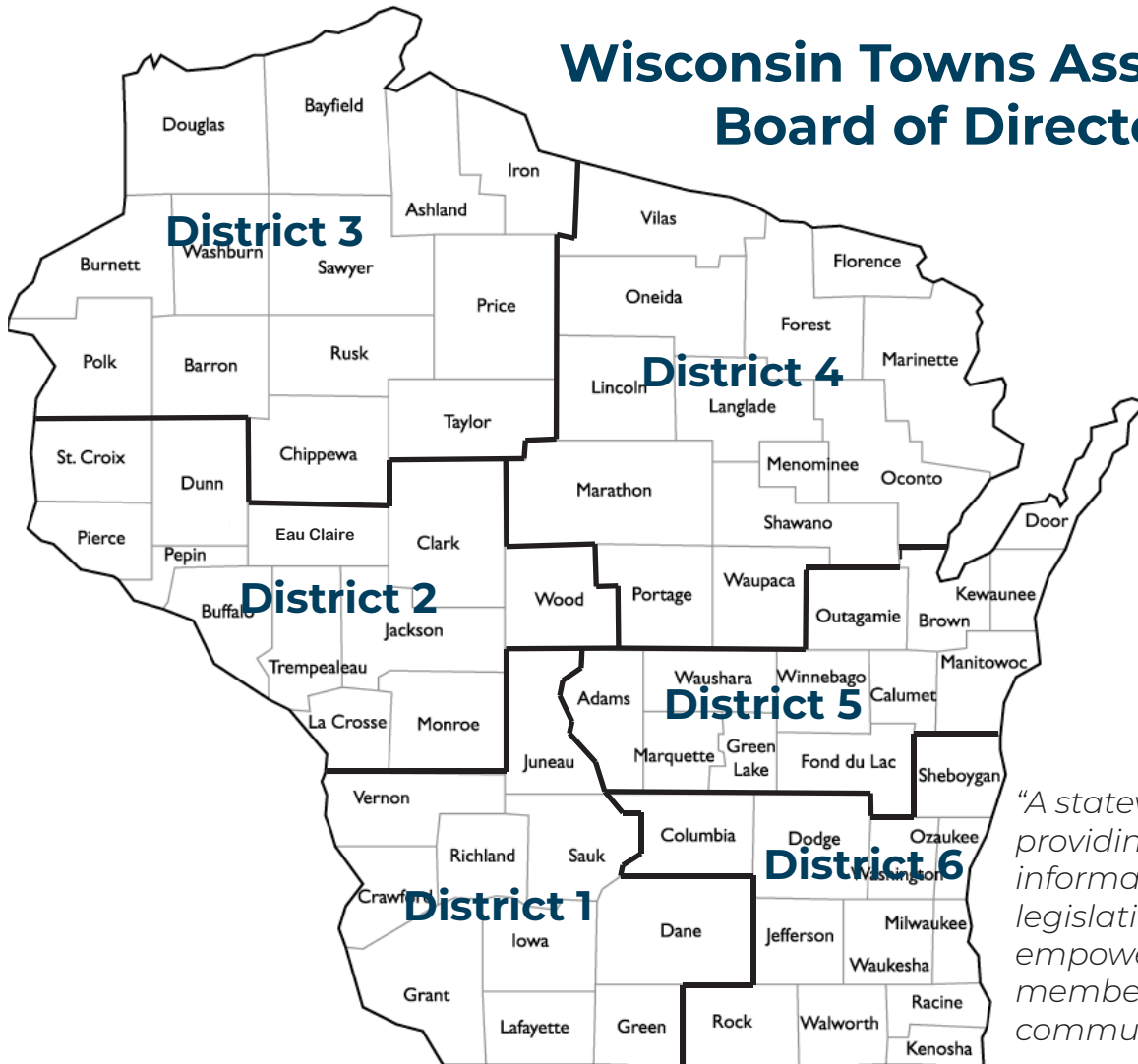
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Wisconsin Towns

July 2026

What's Inside...	Page
From the Executive Director, Mike Koles	4
ATV / UTV Routes	8
Laying Out and Discontinuing Town Roads	14
DATCP Humane Officer Training	16
Unemployment Insurance Reporting Requirements for Towns	18
Director Dialogue featuring Joe Lorence	20
WTIA Annual Convention Save the Date	22
WTIA Annual Convention Lodging	23
WTIA 2026 Fall Workshop Save the Date	24

Empowering Town Officials

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



By
Mike Koles

The Bad News Bears

I remember distinctly the army tank rolling down main street. I was on the south side of 5th avenue in Antigo, Wisconsin, just on the east side of the railroad tracks. It came from my left and stopped right smack in front of me. The turret spun back to the west and a blank round was fired. I was young – very young – but I sensed that something special was happening. Everyone was cheering, happy, proud, and patriotic. I didn't know it at the time, but after a rough nearly two decades, there was a small breath of optimism in the air. **It was Independence Day – 1976.**

That's about all I can remember about our country's bicentennial. I was a kid and focused on learning to play baseball. It wasn't long before I spent every night with my Dad catching pop ups and ground balls. A few years later I would play my first organized ball as a member of the Pee Wee League's Pirates. We were a team of weirdos comprised of blue collar parents' kids that was never supposed to win. We eventually knocked off the kids from the "right side of the tracks" – the Yankees of course – two years in a row to win the championship.

Hollywood produced two of the most American movies of all-time in the year of our bicentennial – Rocky and the Bad News Bears. Even if my family had a VCR, my mother would never have allowed

me to watch the Bad News Bears. She was part of the stay-at-home mom group that would meet at church and spin records forwards *and backwards* to ensure there were no hidden satanic messages in them before allowing their children to listen. I can still remember when she shattered a Judas Priest album I brought home without permission. 😞

Watching a movie about a washed-up alcoholic filled with filthy language, underage drinking, teenage smoking, and satirical racism intended to mock real racism was certainly off limits. But...one of the boys on the team had a VCR and parents that worked during the day. We endlessly watched Tatum O'Neil strike out the boys with her Vaseline enhanced curve ball. I didn't know it at the time, but that movie was drilling in leadership lessons I rely upon to this day. Let's consider a few.



For those of you who don't know the movie, let me provide enough context so that this article provides value. Morris Buttermaker, the heavy drinking washed up minor baseball player, is

hired by an egotistical city council member that just won a class action lawsuit forcing a little league association formerly for only premier players to now accept all players regardless of skill level. The team is comprised of a bunch of misfits that can't hit, can't catch, and can't pitch. Most have their own featured weakness. Engelburg, the catcher, is overweight and can't stop eating.

Tanner, the shortstop, has no emotional intelligence and resorts to attempt to solve every problem with his fists. Another boy is handicapped by severe asthma. The Bears are continuously beaten until they overcome and eventually play the Yankees in the league championship.

Learn from Defeat

The nearly 3-minute trailer to the movie ends with the narrator stating that the movie is “an incredible story of how a disaster combined with a catastrophe produced the greatest champs that ever played ball.” Propagated by lack of skills and absence of coaching leadership, the first disaster is a 26-0 loss to the Yankees that ends in a forfeit because the Bears never notch an out and never bat. The next game is an 18-0 shellacking. You get the drift. It is indeed a series of disasters and catastrophes. After the shellacking, the boys even vote to quit, but the coach vetoes the vote telling them that “quitting is a hard habit to break once you start.”

The Bears eventually mine the positive from each loss both on and off the field. Oglive, the team nerd and statistician, helps them focus on the fact that during the aforementioned shellacking they at least got to bat (they didn't in the first game) and even hit 17 foul balls!

If you look back over our country's 250 years, some of our greatest success was born in defeat. We got our butts kicked by the British for most of the Revolutionary war, but we learned from it. The South whooped us for the first three quarters of the Civil War. The Great Depression, Pearl Harbor, the Challenger explosion, etc. Our victories have often been prompted by our defeats.

Women Rule

Between the second and third game, Buttermaker talks his ex-girlfriend's 11-year-old daughter, Amanda, played by academy award winning Tatum

O'Neil, into playing for the Bears. She is a ringer. She throws faster and more accurately than all of the boys; has wicked spit and curve balls; and is more knowledgeable about baseball than all of the boys combined. Without her, the Bears would never have won a game.

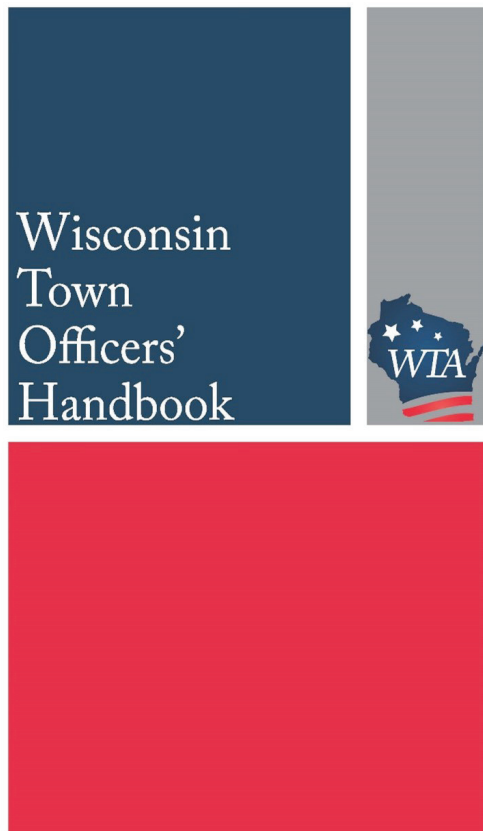
The WTA simply wouldn't be what we are today if we hadn't learned this lesson long ago. Just look at who comprises our staff. For the few men on the team, they would not be who they are without the extraordinary leadership and support coming from our better halves. The same can be said about our last 250 years – Rosie the Riveter, Eleanor Roosevelt, Clara Barton, Harriet Tubman..... If you are not leveraging the power of a diverse team then you are missing out.

You win and Lose as a Team

The first game after Amanda joins the team is lost by the Bears 1 – 0 in the bottom of the last inning on a walk off inside the park home run. There was an error by the right fielder. Many of the players blame him for the loss and thrust sharp and unwarranted critiques in his direction. Truly, however, everyone lost the game. Consider the fact that the pitcher didn't strike out the batter or that the offense never scored a run. The coach chastises their adolescent bullying by reminding them that: “When we win a game it's a team win. When we lose a game it's a team loss.” The eventual implementation of this lesson leads to a team environment that influences a long winning streak right up until the championship game.

I'll let you fill in the historical blanks here. The number of examples where we are strong when together as a country and weak when divided are many. As you reflect on the last 250 years during this Independence Day, I challenge you to determine how you will help us all to leverage our diversity of thoughts, learn from our defeats, and come together to win as a United team.

Fourth Edition Town Officers' Handbook



Fourth Edition, 2023

The 2023 version of the Wisconsin Town Officers' Handbook is now available! This newly revised Fourth Edition incorporates recent law changes through the end of the 2021-2022 Wisconsin Legislative Session.

Topics discussed include ethics, open meetings, public records, town highways, bidding for public contracts, and zoning and related land use regulation, just to name a few. This is the "go-to" reference book for seasoned town officers and new officials who want to understand their role, powers, and duties and do things "by the book".

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Please complete and return this form with payment to:

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ATV / UTV Routes

Local governments have broad authority to open their highways to all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility terrain vehicles (UTVs) by creating ATV/UTV routes. A route is a highway or sidewalk designated for ATV/UTV use. A trail, on the other hand, is another marked corridor on public or private property designated by a governmental agency for use by ATVs/UTVs. Wis. Stat. § 23.33(1). Trails are usually obtained via a public easement or lease agreement.

Q. What authority does a town or village have in establishing a highway as an ATV/UTV route?

A. A town or village board may designate its roads as ATV/UTV routes by adopting an ordinance at a properly noticed board meeting. See Wis. Stat. § 23.33(8)(b)2. The language in the ordinance must be in strict conformity with the statute and administrative rules governing ATVs/UTVs. See Wis. Stat. § 23.33(11). So, for example, since this statute allows individuals to ride ATVs without a license, a local ordinance requiring otherwise would not be enforceable as it would not be in strict conformity with the law.

Ordinances adopted by the board must be properly posted or published in accordance with Wis. Stat. § 60.80(1). Additionally, the adopted ordinance must be sent to the DNR, the state patrol, and to local law enforcement.

Q. May a town or village authorize the use of ATVs on a highway not under its jurisdiction?

A. Yes. Under Wis. Stat. § 23.33(11)(am)4., a town or village may authorize ATV and UTV operation on any highway within its boundaries that is not part of the interstate highway system and has a speed limit of 35 mph or less, regardless of which governmental unit has jurisdiction over the highway. So, a town or village may authorize ATV/UTV operation on qualifying county or state highways within its boundaries without obtaining approval from the county or the Wisconsin Department of Transportation. Counties do not have similar authority over highways outside their jurisdiction.

Q. Must ATV/UTV routes be signed? Who is responsible for doing so?

A. Yes. Pursuant to § 23.33(8)(e)2., Wis. Stat., and NR 64.12(7)(d), Wis. Admin. Code. the unit of government designating the route is responsible for signing or overseeing the signing of the routes. Even if a private organization agrees to pay the upfront costs associated with signing an ATV/UTV route, the town or village is ultimately responsible for ensuring proper signage and for ongoing maintenance.

Q. What options does a town or village have when signing?

- 1) If the town or village opens all of its highways to ATVs, it can post signs at all entrances to the municipality indicating that all highways are open to ATVs.
- 2) If the town or village opens a majority of its roads to ATVs, it may post signs at all entrances to the municipality noting that all of its highways are open to ATVs, unless otherwise indicated. See
- 3) If the town or village opens a majority of its roads to ATVs, it could also erect signs on the highway where the route begins and then erect signs on the highway every time it intersects a trail or route not open to ATVs.
- 4) If the town or village opens a majority of its roads to ATVs where there are multiple intersections, the municipality could opt to place signs every ½ mile on the route.

See Wis. Stat. § 23.33(8)(e) for signage options.

Q. Does opening up a highway as an ATV route increase municipality liability?

A. When a board adopts an ordinance, it is using legislative authority to do so. Pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 893.80(4), the board has immunity from these types of decisions. However, a town board is required to “as soon as practicable take action to make the highway safe for travel” upon learning of any “depression, ditch, hump or embankment that impedes the use of the highway.” See Wis. Stat. §§ 82.03(1) & 82.05(3). So, while a board may have immunity in enacting the ordinance, it is still required to fulfill its duties to keep the highways passable and safe for all users of the highway – including ATV/UTV users.

Q. Do town electors have the authority to direct the town board to open ATV routes?

A. No. While electors sometimes vote at annual or special town meetings to authorize ATV use on town roads, those votes are advisory only. Under Wisconsin law, the authority to create ATV/UTV routes rests with the town board, and any elector vote does not bind the board’s decision.

Q. Can a town or village set a lower speed limit for ATVs/UTVs relative to what is posted for other users of the highway?

A. Yes. 2021 Act 164 clarified that local governments do in fact have the authority to post a lower speed limit for ATV/UTV traffic if desired. See Wis. Stat. § 349.11(11). This authority may be applied to all roads open as ATV/UTV routes, or to only those roads where a lesser speed limit is desired. WTA pursued this clarification in order to bolster local control and avoid potential local government liability should a lesser speed limit have been deemed invalid.

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1272 7th Ave,
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TUESDAY, AUGUST 25

Norm-E-Lane



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W267 Panther Creek Rd,
Chili, WI

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26

Rivers Edge Dairy



CALUMET COUNTY

Kurt & Tiffany Schneider;
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N3485 Church Rd, Chilton, WI

THURSDAY, AUGUST 27

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Virgil & Dawn Haag;
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9158 Britt Valley Rd, Mt. Horeb, WI

We're all impacted by the agriculture industry

It's up to each of us to help protect and sustain our shared resources and communities. Be a part of engaging discussions at an upcoming ACE Twilight Meeting.

Scan the QR code to RSVP to this free event.

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The 2026 ACE® (Agricultural Community Engagement) meetings are brought to you by Professional Dairy Producers® (PDP), Wisconsin Counties Association, and Wisconsin Towns Association.



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Laying Out and Discontinuing Town Roads

Q. What steps are required to expand a town road right of way to create a snowplow turnaround?

A. The steps required to lay out or alter a section of town road (aka “highway”) are outlined in Wis. Stats. §§ 82.10 to 82.12. This process may be initiated in two different ways: either 1) at least 6 resident landowners may submit a written application requesting that the board lay out or alter a highway, or 2) the town board itself can pass a resolution to initiate the process. The landowners’ application or town board resolution must include a legal description of the proposed highway and a scale map of the land that would be affected. The applicants or the town board are also required to file a *lis pendens* under § 840.11 with the county register of deeds (this is a special legal notice to real estate titleholders and potential buyers that the property rights of certain parcels could be affected). If the town board initiates the process via resolution, the *lis pendens* must be filed within 10 days after adoption of the resolution.

After either receiving a written application or adopting a resolution, the town board must set a date for a public hearing. The public hearing notice must include the time and place that the board will hold a public hearing on the proposal, a legal description of the proposed highway change, and a scale map of the of the affected land. A class 3 public hearing notice under ch. 985 must be provided, and notice must be sent by registered mail to all interested parties listed in Wis. Stat. § 82.10(4)(a) at least 30 days prior to the hearing. The cost of providing the required notices must be paid by the party that initiated the process (either the landowners who submitted the written application or the town board if initiated via resolution).

Prior to the public hearing, the town board members must personally examine the location of the proposed road. Wis. Stat. § 82.11. At the public hearing, the town board must first verify on the record that the required notices were properly provided. After listening to public comment regarding the proposed highway project, the town board must decide whether the proposal is in the public’s best interest. The board does not have to make its decision the night of the hearing, but it must decide within 90 days after either receiving the application or adopting the resolution which initiated this process. See § 82.12(1).

If the town board decides to move forward with the project, the board must issue a highway order. The order must be recorded with the county register of deeds and filed with the town clerk. The town clerk must submit a certified copy of the order to the county highway commissioner. In towns with an official map, the order must also be incorporated into the official map. If the town board votes against the proposal, that decision is considered final for one year. However, a decision to either issue or not issue a highway order can be appealed to the circuit court. Wis. Stat. § 82.15. If the rights to the additional land needed to extend a town road cannot be acquired by mutual agreement, the town board must use the condemnation procedures under § 32.05 to acquire the necessary land rights. See § 82.14. Towns are encouraged to work with their local attorneys to ensure the required steps and timing in this process are conducted properly.

Q. A landowner asked the town board to convert the dead-end town road he lives on back to a private driveway. How can the town return a public road to private ownership?

A. The process required to “discontinue” a public road depends on how the road became a public town road in the first place. Town roads laid out via highway order under Wis. Stats. ch. 82, as described in the previous section, may be discontinued using the same process, from §§ 82.10 to 82.12. However, if the town acquired the road via dedication, as part of a deed, plat or CSM approval, the road maintains its legal status as a public highway until the town board either 1) completes the discontinuance process outlined in § 66.1003, or 2) seeks the “vacation” of a platted road through the court system under § 236.43. Town boards should review town records and records at the county register of deeds office to determine how the town originally acquired a road and establish which procedures are necessary to discontinue that road. We strongly recommend working with your town’s local attorney to navigate this complex process.

When deciding whether to discontinue a public road, the town board’s main consideration is whether discontinuing the road would be in the public’s best interest. For example, the town board might weigh the cost of maintaining the section of road against the loss of GTA funding that would result from its discontinuance. Importantly, a town board may not discontinue a road if that action will landlock a property owner (if the discontinuance would deprive the landowner of all access to a public highway). Wis. Stat. § 66.1003(10). Additionally, DNR approval is required before discontinuing a road that provides public access to a navigable lake or stream. See § 66.1006.

Q. One of our town roads hasn’t been maintained or used in many years. Can the town simply treat that road as “abandoned,” without going through the formal discontinuance process?

A. A town road’s status as “abandoned” depends on whether certain criteria have been met. Under Wis. Stat. § 82.19(2), any part of a road acquired by highway order under ch. 82 shall cease to be a public highway if it is not opened or worked within 4 years from the date it was initially laid out. Roads that were opened to the public may also be considered abandoned if a 2-part test is met: 1) no town highway funds have been spent on the road for 5 years, *and* 2) the road has been entirely abandoned as a route of vehicular travel. “Vehicular travel” means *any* travel by cars, trucks, tractors, or motorcycles (*not* snowmobiles or ATVs). Use of a road by just one family and their guests could be enough to prevent the road from being considered “entirely abandoned.” See *Lange v. Tumm*, 2000 WI App 160. Even if a road meets the criteria for abandonment, this section only applies to roads acquired under ch. 82. Roads acquired via deed, plat or CSM approval may only be discontinued via the procedures described in the previous section. Similarly, formal discontinuance is required for any roads that provide public access to a navigable lake or stream.

Q. Who takes ownership of a road after it has been discontinued?

A. When a public road is discontinued, ownership of the land used for the road automatically reverts to the adjoining property owners. Wis. Stat. § 66.1005. If the discontinued road is located between lots owned by different property owners, the land reverts to the lots to which it originally belonged, if that can be determined from property records. If prior ownership cannot be determined, the land underlying the road is divided equally between the property owners on each side of the road.

DATCP to Offer Annual Humane Officer Training this September

By Dr. Yvonne Bellay, State Humane Officer

Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection



About a third of Wisconsin's counties and more than 90 of its villages and cities have humane officers. These non-law enforcement individuals are appointed by the governing body of a local jurisdiction. Training is required for anyone serving as a humane officer in Wisconsin and the training must be completed within one year of being appointed. Join the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) for the 2026 Humane Officer Training Program. Registration is now open for Annual Humane Officer Training, scheduled for September 21-25, 2026 at the DoubleTree by Hilton in Madison. Wisconsin registration closes September 15.

Dr. Yvonne Bellay

Humane officers investigate complaints of animal abuse and neglect for local governments as well as overseeing cases that involve strays, bites, and hoarding. They may also assist their local public health department to enforce their rabies control program, enforce dog licensing requirements, enforce animal cruelty statutes, seek subpoenas, issue citations, and request prosecution. Humane officers may be employees of a city, county, town, or village; employees of humane societies that contract with local governments to provide these services; or self-employed contractors. If a local government does not appoint a humane officer, local law enforcement is required to handle animal cases regardless of their experience. While not required, some officers who are designated by their departments to handle animal cases take the extra step of being formally appointed as humane officers.

During the five-day training, course topics will include laws, search and seizure, investigating animal crimes, the link to domestic violence, evidence collection and documentation, forensics, and common animal husbandry practices. The courses are led by veterinarians, attorneys, and law officers with years of experience investigating animal cases and are coordinated in partnership with the University of Missouri Extension Law Enforcement Training Institute. This training meets the legal requirements for appointed humane officers and may provide recertification hours for law officers, if approved by their supervisor.



For more information about DATCP's Humane Officers Program or to register for the training, visit https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/HumaneOfficerTraining.aspx.



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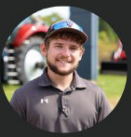
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By: Melissa Kono, UW Ext./WTA Clerk Specialist

Unemployment Insurance Reporting Requirements for Towns

Employers in Wisconsin, including local government employers, are required to file a quarterly wage report with the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) for all eligible employees employed by the town. See Wis. Stat. 108.205 (1). Gross wages paid to eligible employees during the quarter along with employee names and social security numbers are reported on a quarterly basis with failure to file by the deadline resulting in a penalty. This information provided by the quarterly report is compiled for labor statistic purposes and to prevent overpayment of unemployment insurance benefits.

Employee Eligibility

Per Wis. Stat. 108.02 (12) (a) “employee” includes any individual who is or has been performing services for pay for an employing unit. This includes both full-time and part-time employees. Examples of employees typically employed by a town who should be included in the quarterly wage report:

- Town Public Works and Road Maintenance crew
- Election workers
- Appointed officials, such as an appointed clerk or treasurer (unless they are appointed to fill an elected term)
- Deputy clerks and treasurers employed by the town
- Town dump or recycling drop-off site workers
- Volunteer Firefighters / EMS workers
- Seasonal workers such as park attendants, additional snow plow drivers, etc.

There are some exemptions to eligible employment status for the quarterly report, including the employment of elected officials. See Wis. Stat. 108.02(15)(f). Those commonly earning wages from the town but who are exempt from the quarterly wages report include:

- Elected officials, such as the chair, supervisors, and elected clerks or treasurers
- Appointed officials filling an elected term. For example, a clerk appointed to fill the term after an elected clerk has resigned
- Temporary emergency employees, such as those helping after natural disasters like significant snowfall, flooding, tornadoes, etc.
- Those in an established business who do work for the town such as contracted snow plowing or lawn mowing services
- Those in policymaking or advisory position if duties do not ordinarily require more than 8 hours per week, such as Board of Review or Planning Commission citizen members

Filing the Quarterly Wages Report

The quarterly wages report is available electronically on the DWD website and requires the name, social security number and wages paid to each employee who is employed by the town during the quarter. The user has the option to save the information for each employee for future reporting requirements, even if the employee did not earn wages during the quarter. This report is due no later than the last day of the month following the completion of each quarter. Quarterly report deadlines:

Quarter 1-April 30 th	Quarter 2- July 31 st
Quarter 3-October 31 st	Quarter 4-January 31 st

Failure to submit reports by the deadline results in a fee of \$100 or \$20 per employee, whichever is greater, or a \$50 fee if filed within 30 days of the fee assessment. See Wis. Stat. § 108.22(1)(a). While most towns have a 0% tax rate and therefore do not need to pay at the time of filing or report any additional information, the quarterly report is mandatory. Reports may be filed online at: dwd.wi.gov/uitax.

NewHire Reporting

The NewHire reporting system is designed to prevent overpayment of unemployment insurance benefits, monitor for public benefits fraud, and uphold child support payment obligations by reporting new employees upon hire. Employers with a Federal Employer Identification Number are to report new employees to both WI Unemployment Insurance and the State Directory of New Hires within 20 days of hire: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uinh/>. Employees who are rehired, recalled, or returning to work after an unpaid interval of more than 60 days (including individuals who remain on the payroll during the separation) will need to be reported again. While election workers are not exempt from this report and should be reported through the NewHire system upon appointment, they need only be reported once and are exempt from rules under WI Administrative Code DWD 142.02(7)(b) regarding recalled employees, even if there is a 60-day employment lapse between elections and their employment as election inspectors.

Resources

More information for employers on unemployment insurance, reporting requirements, and the reporting portal may be found on the Wisconsin DWD website: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uitax/>. In addition to filing the quarterly wage reports, users can update employer registration and contact information, report newly hired employees, and respond electronically to unemployment insurance claim forms. The Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development joined us for a Lunch and Learn webinar on “Unemployment Insurance Reporting for Towns” in March 2026. The Lunch and Learn webinar contains additional information on unemployment claims for employment separation of town employees as well as a walk-through of the quarterly wage report. The webinar was recorded and available on the Wisconsin Towns Association website under Resources: <https://vimeo.com/1172986411/81c57ba112?fl=ip&fe=ec>.

Director Dialogue



By: Jake Langenhahn, Outreach Specialist



Joe Lorence's path to getting involved in his community is one defined by willingness and a passion to do the right thing. He was elected Town Chair of the town of Marshall in 1993, and served in that office for 28 years. "There were a lot of problems in the town" he said. "Multiple lawsuits were dragging the town down, and they had to get resolved." Joe had never been to a town meeting prior to being elected town chair. Prior to being town chair, he had applied to fill a county board supervisor vacancy. "I didn't get it, but it got my name out there, and people started to think of me in the community." Around a decade later, he was elected Chair of the Rusk County Unit, and in August 2025, he was elected to the WTA Board of Directors.

Joe Lorence grew up on a dairy farm in the Town of Marshall. After high school, he completed some schooling at Mount Scenario College in Ladysmith, traveled around the country, and ultimately ended up moving back to the area in his 20s. He worked as a foreman for Weather Shield in Ladysmith for 28 years. While employed, he completed his Associate's Degree in Business Supervision Management at Barron County Technical College. He also worked as a licensed realtor for a realty company for 15 years. Retirement has given him the opportunity to become more involved in the WTA, including being a Town Advocacy Council Ambassador and serve on the WTA Board of Directors.

When asked what he likes to do when he's not doing town or WTA business, Joe said that he

really likes to travel. He's visited France, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Japan, and many other places! He said he enjoyed going to New Zealand to see Halley's Comet in 1996. While Joe has been all around the world, he says that there's something very special about northern Wisconsin. He believes it's a great place for families, appreciates how wonderful the wildlife and natural areas are, and thinks that there's opportunities for everyone. Understandably, Joe prides himself on being an advocate for northern Wisconsin communities. "I hope to be a voice for up north Wisconsin. We need to get programming, whether it's the WTA, state agencies, or other partners, up here to support our town officers."

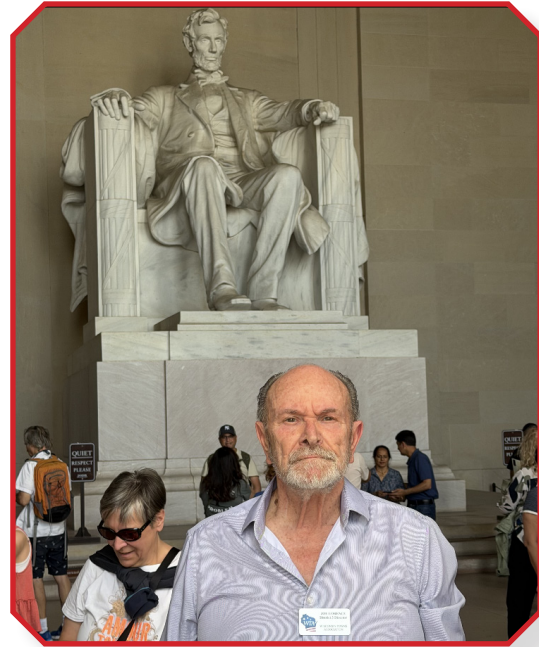


Joe has been a town officer for the Town of Marshall since 1993.

Joe was going to retire from town government in April 2021. "I had worked with someone in the town to get them familiar with the job. The clerk and the treasurer also at the same time decided to move on, so I decided to run for treasurer to help during the transition." Joe has been his town's treasurer for 5 years, and really enjoys the work. He says keeping the town's banking in order and tax duties keep him busy, but he's happy it keeps him involved in town operations. One thing that Joe was proud to accomplish as town chair was that he helped obtain \$1.6 million in grants for

rehab loans for low to moderate income residents in the town through the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development's Block Grant Program. The town of Marshall worked with the village of Sheldon and village of Conrath to obtain these funds. Joe is proud of the project because the funds were used to create a no interest loan program that will stay in his community for a long time. "It raised the valuation of the municipality through improved homes, well and septic, and it allowed people to stay in their homes."

Joe is extremely grateful for all of the opportunities he's had so far in life. At one point during our interview, Joe reflected on how he never expected to do some of the things he's done, given that he was a farm kid from a small town in the Northwoods. When asked how he was able to do so much he said: "Talk to people, see where it gets you!"



Joe, in Washington D.C., visiting the Lincoln Memorial.



Jeff Blanner

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Mark Your Calendar!

WTA Annual Convention

Sunday, October 4 - Tuesday, October 6, 2026
Holiday Inn & Convention Center, Stevens Point

Featuring an exciting mix of educational opportunities on the following topics:

- Maximizing Your Road Funding--Lessons from Successful Grant Applications and How to Leverage Available Funding
- WisDOT Programs: Rustic Roads, Scenic Byways, and Transportation Economic Assistance
- Overview of USDA Rural Development Program
- Industrial Development 101: What It Means for Wisconsin Towns
- WisDOR Debt Collection Programs for Local Governments
- Wisconsin Towns' Guide to 2026 Elections for Clerks
- End of Year Financial Preparation
- Using User Fees to Fund Fire Protection Services
- Clicks, Hacks, and Cybersecurity Attacks
- Planning for Large-Scale Wind and Solar Projects
- Building Inspection 101
- Understanding Emergency Management in Wisconsin: Your Role and Responsibilities
- Legal Cracker Barrel
- Flood Resiliency Slow the Flow Workshop



Watch for the complete schedule of convention events and registration in the August WTA magazine.

2026 WTA Convention Lodging

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Stevens Point Holiday Inn & Convention Center

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4917 Main St., Stevens Point – RATE - \$94.00

FAIRFIELD INN & SUITES – 715-342-9300
5317 HWY 10 East, Stevens Point – RATE - \$139.00

COBBLESTONE HOTEL & SUITES – 715-343-0522
1117 Centerpoint Dr., Stevens Point – RATE - \$110.00

COMFORT INN – 715-496-2007
1560 American Dr., Plover – RATE - \$110.00

HAMPTON INN PLOVER – 715-295-9900
3090 Village Park Dr., Plover – RATE - \$98.00

DAYS INN & SUITES – 715-254-8685
159 Division St., Stevens Point – RATE - \$89.00



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Save the Date!

Fall Workshops September 2026



Join us to learn about budgeting, grant writing, assessment roll corrections and chargebacks, financial reconciliation, and other important topics affecting towns and villages in Wisconsin!

Tuesday, 9/15: Barneveld, Deer Valley Lodge

Wednesday, 9/16: Fond du Lac, Prairie Theater

Thursday, 9/17: Green Bay, Rock Garden

Monday, 9/21: Stevens Point, Holiday Inn

Tuesday, 9/22: Rhinelander, The Pines

Wednesday, 9/23: Cable, Lakewoods Resort

Thursday, 9/24: Eau Claire, Florian Gardens

Monday – Thursday, 9/28 – 10/1: Webinars

Watch for a full schedule, program descriptions, and registration information in the August magazine!

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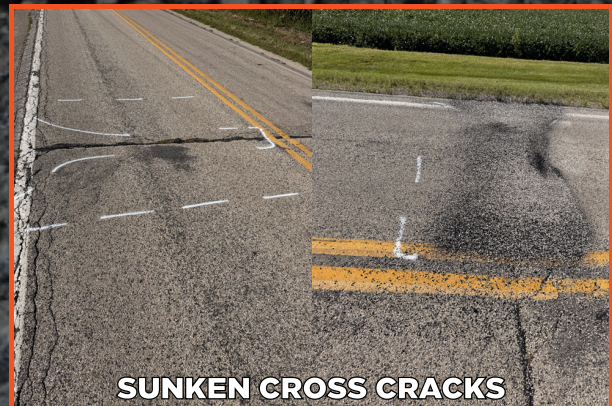
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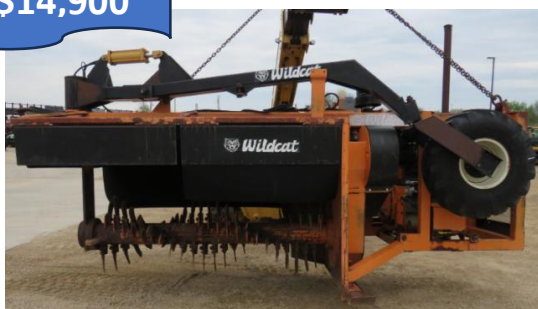
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