

DCEC Newsletter

Environmental News for Door County



published and © 2009 by
door county environmental council
p.o. box 114 - fish creek, wi 54212
(920)743-6003 fax: (920)743-6727
www.dcec-wi.org
email: info@dcec-wi.org

WINTER 2009

In This Issue

Page 1

- New Mercury Levels for Wisconsin Coal Power Plants.

Page 2

- Take a look at the new low-flush toilets
- Swedes are reclaiming phosphorus before it hits the sewage plant!

Page 3

- Update on DCEC legal actions for Hines Emerald Dragonfly.
- Update on the other "Emerald"... the not so nice one...

Page 4

- Check out our new Renewable Energy column.
- Are outdoor wood furnaces creating a nuisance?

Page 5

- DCEC President Eileen Andera urges you to dispose of your old TV properly!

Page 6

- A new power line to bring more electricity to northern Door needs scrutiny.

Page 7

- People & membership.

Back Page

- Need to make a stink about winter manure spreading?

New, Stronger Mercury Rules for Wisconsin Power Plants

AFTER NEARLY A DECADE of diligent work, Wisconsin has passed a strong mercury rule in 2008 that will require 90 percent reductions in toxic mercury emissions from coal-fired power plants by 2015. If power plants agree to more stringent standards on pollutants that cause dangerous soot and smog in the atmosphere they can postpone compliance on mercury until 2021.



By reducing the toxic mercury pollution in our lakes, rivers and streams, this rule will help protect the health of Wisconsinites, especially children who are most vulnerable to the effects of mercury, and help preserve our state's strong and celebrated fishing tradition.

These new rules are to be enforced by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, not the most forceful control mechanism to ensure compliance into the future even with an elected DNR Secretary.

Under the rule, the state's large coal-fired power plants (those with a capacity of 150 Megawatts [MW] and greater) must achieve a 90% mercury emission reduction through one of two compliance paths.

Small coal-fired power plants (25 MW and 150 MW) must reduce their mercury emissions to a level defined as Best Available Control Technology (BACT).

Wisconsin's four major utilities, Dairyland Power Cooperative, We Energies, Wisconsin Power & Light Company and Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, must reduce their mercury emissions 40% by January 1, 2010.

Mercury emissions expected from the application of this adopted rule will reduce coal-fired power plant mercury emissions from 3,200 pounds per year to 500 pounds of mercury air emissions annually.

By January 1, 2015 existing large coal-fired power plants must achieve a

Please see "COAL" page five



DCEC Incorporated in 1971 under the laws of Wisconsin as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation

FOCUS ON: Low Flush Toilets Save Water

TOILETS USE MORE WATER than any other appliance or fixture in your home, totaling approximately 30 percent of residential water consumption. And because toilets often leak, they can contribute to major water losses that, many times, go undetected.

Designed for water conservation, high-efficiency toilets (HETS) have been defined by the plumbing industry and Environmental Protection Agency as those that use an average of 20 percent less water-per-flush than the industry standard of 1.6 gallons (or around 1.28 gallons per-flush.) Using a high-efficiency toilet can save up to 8,760 gallons of water each year for a family of four with six average daily flushes of water per person. In most municipalities this translates to a savings of \$50 per year in water/sewer charges.



There are currently four (4) types of HETS available.

Gravity Fed Single Flush Toilets: Gravity fed single-flush toilets operate the same way as any standard toilet, but use less total capacity per flush. (1.1 and 1.28 gallons).

Dual-Flush Toilets: Designed for light and heavy flushes, these operate with an average of less than 1.2 gallons per flush. They furnish the option of high or low flushes from 0.8 to 1.1 for the low flush and 1.3 to 1.6 gallons for the heavy flush. The choice of flush is made with a handle that

can move up or down, or a two-button system giving the heavy or lower flush desired.

Pressure Assist Toilets: Pressure assist or pressurized tank toilets are another high-performance, low-consumption alternative. These utilize either water line pressure of a device in the tank to create additional force from air pressure to flush the toilet. The device in the tank could be a storage device with compressed air (would require replacement) or a tank that creates pressure when it is being filled. These typically average 1.1 to 1.2 gallons per flush and will move the volume of water more quietly.

Power Assist Toilets: Power assist toilets operate using a pump to force water down at a higher velocity than gravity toilets and require a small fractional horsepower 110 Volt pump to create the pressure. These operate between 1.0 and 1.3 gallons and are available as dual-flush models also.

Companies that produce these toilet options, such as *Niagara Conservation* or the *Chicago Faucet Company*, are available on-line with your web browser or you can contact your local plumber to get more information.

If you want a simple but cost-effective method of cutting down on water use without replacing your existing toilet, try holding the handle of the toilet partly down for less than a full flush (this might take a little practice!)

Or try inserting a “space user” to occupy water space in the flush tank. A plastic jug filled with water is a cheap alternative and stays in place permanently

Condensed from *1/12/09 Water Efficiency Newsletter*
~ JMV

Sweden Leads in Unique Phosphorus Recycling Technique

WHILE WATER CONSERVATION IS a major issue facing today’s world, so is phosphorus depletion. Like oil, phosphorus is a nonrenewable resource. The earth will run out of it someday, and we will lose an absolutely essential fertilizer nutrient for life on our planet.

Phosphorus is mined at only a handful of locations worldwide. As a major component in fertilizer and our food, phosphorus moves from our wastewater systems to our municipal sewage treatment plants. Surprisingly, of the raw sewage entering treatment plants, human urine makes up only 1% of the total volume, **but it contains 80% of all the nutrients.**

In Europe, they recognize that every municipal wastewater treatment plant is a potential “phosphorus mine.” If urine were to be processed separately, wastewater plants could be reduced in size, water protection would be improved and the recovered nutrients recycled. In other words, we could keep tons of phosphorus out of our waters!

As phosphorus is the leading nutrient for our green stuff, our cladophora, this would be especially good for Door County.

In another approach, Sweden took the lead in harvesting phosphorus at the point of supply... **our toilets!** They developed the *NoMix* toilet, which collects urine separately from solid waste. This allows them to collect the urine, store it in tanks for six months, and then use it as fertilizer without being purified. The Swiss are actively

studying this system.

Switzerland has also started using some of the *NoMix* toilets, where a majority interviewed said they had no problem using the new toilets, even men who had to sit rather than stand to use the new units.

With more European countries coming on board with stricter phosphorus restrictions for their wastewater treatment plants, the *NoMix* toilet may be in all of our futures.

For those intrepid do-it-yourselfers who wish to utilize their own phosphorus resource as a fertilizer for lawns and gardens, we have read of an anonymous blogger who recommends a mixture of one part urine to nine parts water. We do not, however, vouch for the veracity of this source.

Further information is available at DCPhosphateFree.org.

(DCEC is an active partner in the Partnership for Phosphate Reduction who contributed information for this article by Ralph Valatka. Information for this article was provided by articles by Paul O’Callaghan, CEO of Clean Tech Development, Canada, and Vincent Landon of swissinfo.ch on the web)



More News on Hines Emerald Dragonfly Habitat

USFWS Case Closer to Settlement

The *Hines Emerald Critical Habitat Settlement Agreement* – which we discussed and approved long ago has been awaiting final government approval and a determination of attorney's fees and other details needing attention. It has finally been approved by the government, signed and filed in federal court. Now, the Federal Judge, Hon. Blanche M. Manning, United States District Court, Northern District of Illinois, Eastern Division, simply needs to approve it.

The plaintiffs in the litigation are: Northwood's Wilderness Recovery, the Michigan Nature Association, Door County Environmental Council, the Habitat Education Center, Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Center for Biological Diversity. The federal defendants are: Dirk Kempthorne, Secretary of the United States Department of the Interior; and H. Dale Hall, Director of United States Fish & Wildlife Service. All parties have agreed on the *Stipulated Settlement Agreement and Proposed Order of Dismissal*.

The basis for the litigation was the exclusion of 14,249 acres of proposed Hines Emerald Dragonfly critical habitat, including 12,269 acres of Federal Lands in Michigan's Hiawatha National Forest in upper Michigan. Additional units totaling 786 acres were also excluded in Missouri's Mark Twain National Forest.

This resulted in our plaintiffs' *Complaint for Declaratory and Injunctive Relief*, wherein we challenged the Fish & Wildlife Service designations.

DCEC has members who are property owners affected by the upper Michigan designation exclusion. We were also keenly watching for any changes that *might* have been proposed for Door County Hines Emerald habitat.

As a reminder, under this agreement Fish & Wildlife will reopen for comment the old proposed designation on April 15, 2009. They will submit a notice to the federal register on that date – publication may follow shortly thereafter, advising the public of their intent to reconsider the exclusion of these federal lands from the designation.

Then, they will submit a new final designation for publication in the *Federal Register* by April 15, 2010. In the meantime, the current designation will remain in place.

Terms of the settlement include [condensed]:

- US Fish & Wildlife Service reconsiders *without vacatur* the federal exclusions from critical habitat designation.
- The Service will reopen the proposed critical habitat for public comment via the *Federal Register*.
- Service will submit a new designation by April 15, 2010.
- During this process all existing designations will remain in place.
- Plaintiffs do not waive their ability to challenge substantive decisions made by the defendants and defendants do not waive any applicable claims or defenses.
- The order may be modified by the court upon good cause shown consistent with the *Federal Rules of*

Civil Procedure.

- Defendants agree that plaintiffs are the "prevailing parties" in this action and agree to pay to plaintiff's attorneys' fees and costs for the litigation.
- Parties agree that Plaintiffs reserve the right to seek additional fees. Costs subsequent to this agreement arising from a need to defend or enforce against efforts to modify the outlined schedule or for any other unforeseen continuation of this action are also included.
- The terms of this Agreement shall become effective upon entry of an order by the court and all counts of the Plaintiffs' Complaint shall be dismissed with prejudice, pursuant to *Federal Rules of Civil Procedure*.

Sincere appreciation for the litigation research and work of the lead attorney for the *Natural Resources Defense Council* in New York City, attorney Aaron Blume and the other co-litigants in Michigan, Illinois and Missouri throughout this protection effort.

DCEC is proud to have been involved with the original endangered designation of the Hines Emerald Dragonfly through the efforts of Dr. Zimmerman and others here in Door County.

It is essential that critical habitat areas be designated and enforced as part of the recovery program for the Hines Emerald Dragonfly. This litigation is a continuation of the many years of effort to achieve that desired result.

~JMV



Emerald Ash Borer Threat Continues

LATE FALL BROUGHT ANOTHER EAB detection, this time in two recently planted trees in rural Kenosha County. In August the trees were brought from Illinois in violation of the quarantine. This was at the end of the EAB adult flight period so the risk of adult emergence is currently believed to be low.

There is very little Ash in the vicinity of the planting site and surveys of the area did not reveal any additional infested trees. The two trees have been destroyed and the threat of infestation removed.

In October Emerald Ash Borer was found again in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan in Delta County at Garden Corners. (east of Escanaba). Since then there have been additional finds within a few miles. One is at Cooks, only four miles away in Schoolcraft County. This brings to five the number of UP counties where EAB infestations have been found. Portions of Schoolcraft and Delta Counties have been quarantined.

The Michigan Department of Agriculture has decided to focus its EAB

efforts on the Upper Peninsula. Their quarantines have been changed so that ash wood and firewood can now be moved anywhere within

Lower Michigan, although long distance moving is discouraged. No one is permitted to bring this wood over the Mackinac Bridge. More information on the EAB in Michigan can be found at www.michigan.gov/eab

A quarantine restricts movement of hardwood, firewood, ash nursery stock, ash logs, and other ash products that could transport EAB out of the quarantined counties. The quarantine affects logging operations, since it places restrictions on moving logs out of the four-county quarantines area in Wisconsin in an effort to stop the spread of EAB.

The quarantined counties in Wisconsin are: Fond du Lac, Washington, Ozaukee and Sheboygan in eastern Wisconsin. More Wisconsin information including maps can be found at www.emeraldashborer.wi.gov/pdf/WIEABquarantine.pdf

~JMV



WE HAVE CROSSED THE RUBICON! We have arrived! We have come of age!

Renewable Energy is no longer a homeless voice crying in the wilderness of Door County

With funding help from Wisconsin's Focus on Energy Program, DCEC's *Renewable Energy Task Force* has been very busy. So, with the DCEC's board's support and encouragement, we've started this column as a regular feature in this newsletter to let you know how things are going.

Our last year marked a number of "firsts!" Our first logo, our first brochure, Door County's first renewable energy radio show, Door County's first *Renewable Energy Resource Guide* and Door County's first renewable energy web pages.

We continue presenting annual classes at The Clearing. We exhibit at the annual Door County Home



Builders Show, the Sustainable Door Fair, and anywhere else we can set up our new table-top exhibit. We sponsor our county's participation in the annual National Solar Homes Tour every October.

And..... we have a new website! A website within

DCEC's website, actually, where you can download copies of our brochures and our resource guide, read our history, find renewable energy tips and even download podcasts of our radio program *Energy Matters*.

You can also sign up to receive email updates and renewable energy alerts in Door County. Or, if you would like a presentation for your community group, church or social club, you can get in touch with us at the site:

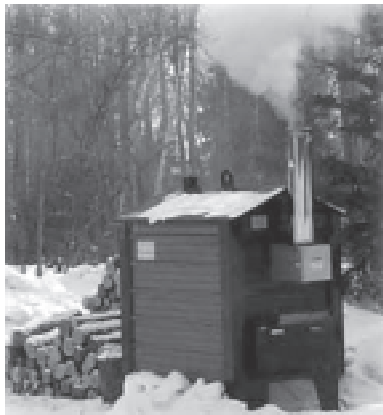
www.RenewableDoorCounty.com

email infoRETF@dcec-wi.org

or phone Don Pardonner at 839-1182.

Outdoor Woodburning Fireplaces Bringing Complaints

DCEC HAS RECEIVED A FEW COMPLAINTS regarding the smoke and smell from outdoor wood burning furnaces used throughout the county. The county ordinance that regulates open burning, outdoor burning and refuse burning and the use of fireworks is Chapter 31.18 of the Door County Code which was revised and adopted in 2005. The Ordinance applies to all outdoor burning and refuse burning within the County but *does not apply to incorporated municipalities*.



The ordinance does not apply to grilling or cooking using charcoal, wood, propane or natural gas and does not apply to burning in a stove, furnace, fireplace, or other heating device *within* a building used for human or animal habitation.

It also does not apply to the use of propane, acetylene, natural gas, kerosene, gasoline, or other petroleum derivative intended for heating, construction, or maintenance activities.

MATERIALS THAT MAY NOT BE BURNED:

Unless specific written approval has been obtained from the

Department of Natural Resource, the following materials may not be burned in an open fire, incinerator, burn barrel, furnace, stove or any other *indoor or outdoor incinerator or heating device*:

1. Rubbish or garbage containing food wastes, food wraps, packaging, animal carcasses, paint or painted materials, furniture, composite shingles, construction or demolition debris.
2. Waste oil or other oily waste except used oil burned under restrictions of Chapter NR 590.
3. Asphalt and products containing asphalt.
4. Treated, varnished or painted wood, including plywood and composite wood products.
5. Any plastic material including nylon, PVC, ABS, polystyrene, or urethane foam, and synthetic fabrics, plastic films and plastic containers.
6. Rubber including tires and synthetic rubber-like products.
7. Newspaper, corrugated cardboard, container board, office paper and other materials that must be recycled. (Exception is small quantities of confidential papers from a residence to prevent the access to financial records).

OUTDOOR WOOD-FIRED FURNACES:

An outdoor wood-fired furnace must be approved and employed for use as a furnace in accordance with the applicable and accepted codes, laws, regulations and rules.

Please turn to FURNACES—page six

• doing your part • making a difference • doing your part • making a difference • doing your part •

What You Can Do for Our Earth

• doing your part • making a difference • doing your part • making a difference • doing your part •

Because of the upcoming switch to Digital Broadcast television, recycling centers have seen an influx of analog televisions coming into their facilities. You do not need to buy a new TV if you buy a converter box for your analog set and hook it up to it, or if you pay for your TV service through cable or satellite system. Your existing TV will work just fine with either the converter box or pay service.

If you choose to buy a new digital television set please be responsible with the disposal of your old set. Like all electronics, your TV is filled with toxic metals and chemicals that should *not* be put into landfills where the toxins will leak into the air and water.

There are a few responsible recycling centers in Door County that will take your old TV (or computer), remove the toxins from it and *properly* dispose of them. Here are a couple that are on the West Side of Sturgeon Bay.

Sturgeon Bay Utilities 230 E. Vine St. 746-2820 - SBU has a drop-off program 4 times a year with the next one coming up in early May. Bring your TV or computer to the office at that time and they will charge you 25-cents-a-pound to *properly*

dispose of your e-waste.

Little Hoppers 1509 Division Rd. 746-7434 - Little Hoppers charges \$20.00 for a TV up to 27" (more for larger sets) or a computer monitor. They charge \$30.00 for a complete computer system. They also *properly* dispose of your e-waste.

If you don't live in Door County, look in the yellow pages under "recycling" to find a place near you and be sure to ask if they recycle *responsibly*, not just throw it into a

dump. Regulations will vary from state to state. You could also go on the web to www.Earth911.org to find a place near you to dispose of your e-waste.

In the Fall of '08, Door County had a free e-waste recycle program and they were overwhelmed with electronics including over 1,000 computer monitors! It's uncertain if or when this program might be repeated

In this electronic age there is a lot of e-waste out there and the more we *properly* recycle it, the less we are likely to breathe in or eventually drink it ourselves.

Sileen Andera DCEC President



COAL—from page one

90% mercury reduction or limit the concentration of mercury emissions to 0.0080 pounds of mercury per gigawatt-hour.

Compliance must be demonstrated annually on a unit-by-unit basis. However, several large units under common ownership or control can average to meet the mercury emission standard.

At the request of Governor Doyle, a broad spectrum of stakeholders convened, researched, compromised and voted overwhelmingly in favor of strong recommendations that will help guide Wisconsin in the transition to a clean energy economy.

These recommendations include a three to four fold increase in Wisconsin's investment in energy efficiency, a renewable standard requiring utilities to produce 10 percent of their electricity from renewable

sources by 2013 and 25 percent by 2025. Included was a requirement of 75 percent of greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels by 2050.

These recommendations provide a framework for Wisconsin to create jobs and clean our environment by becoming a leader in reducing global warming pollution. This planning and the revised recommendations will interlock extensively with Federal goals that are, and will be, becoming a reality under the new administration.

Communities throughout Wisconsin should soon realize that it is to their benefit to become actively involved in the alternative non-polluting methods of electrical generation and latch on to the funding that will become an integral part of the Federal programs benefiting all of the states. These are exciting times for our country and the change will be welcomed in getting the stalled economy moving forward again. ~JMV

Electric Transmission Line Proposed

ON OCTOBER 13TH THE American Transmission Company (ATC) held an open-house meeting to enlist local support for their revised plans to expand electrical transmission capabilities to northern Door County.

This is consistent with a requirement that power lines be sufficient to handle future needs by designing 10 years in advance.

The existing power line route starts at the Sturgeon Bay canal substation. It continues north along the east side right-of-way on highway 42/57 to the intersection of Gordon road (Culver's corner.) From there it extends directly north to a substation at Dunn Road.

An alternate proposed route would follow the same highway 42-57 right-of-way, but it would diverge at the Gordon Road intersection and follow the highway to the 42-57 intersection (The Mill Supper Club.) It would continue north along Highway 42 to Dunn Road, then west to the Dunn Road substation.

This alternative route would create a new power line right-of-way that would be longer by over one full mile. ATC stated that this alternative proposal is a requirement by the State Public Service Commission to study all possible



routes for future line locations.

A duplicate feed line presently follows Cherry Road (North Eighth Avenue, County Highway HH) also connecting with the Dunn Road substation.

Several years ago, at a joint meeting with Peter Peshek, representatives of ATC and DCEC determined the best solution for more power to northern Door was to *expand the existing route.*

Then, the original plan was to construct a line with double poles in an "H" configuration to support needed extra conductors. After discussion, all parties agreed that new, larger single poles would be more acceptable for aesthetic and environmental reasons. The older, smaller single pole line would remain in place to furnish power until the new line construction was complete.

It is DCEC's desire that this mutually agreed upon construction plan be the direction ATC takes in this new upgrade. It is planned to be in service by 2012. This upgraded line will carry either 115, 138 or 161 thousand volts.

The power line from Dunn Road northward to Egg Harbor is a 69 thousand-volt line. There are two 69 thousand volt lines and two 138 thousand volt lines passing through southern Door from Dykesville and from the Kewaunee area.

American Transmission Company was formed a few years ago when the state utilities realized they could be better served with a consortium of all of the state utilities in combination. The ATC was designated as owner of the major grid supply lines throughout the state. Individual companies/corporations own stock in this new holding company.

The American Transmission Company now charges their respective utilities for the use of the ATC lines and the smaller utility companies make a profit on their stock in proportion to their share of ownership,

The smaller utility companies, (WPSC and others) still maintain ownership of the small feeder lines in their own respective areas of operation. The small utilities are able to deduct the expense of "renting" the ATC power lines as opposed to maintaining their own lines which was the case prior to ATC formation.

~JMV

Furnaces-con't.

1. The outdoor wood-fired furnace shall not be used to burn any of the prohibited materials listed in the previous section of this ordinance.
2. The outdoor furnace shall be located at least 100 feet from the nearest building (your neighbors) which is not on the same property as the outdoor wood-fired furnace.
3. The outdoor furnace shall have a chimney that extends at least as high above the ground surface as the height of the roof of the building which it serves. A lesser height may be approved on a case-by-case basis if the smoke from a lower chimney does not create a nuisance for neighbors.
4. The owner or occupant of the property shall obtain a one-time permit from the Fire Chief, Town Chairperson, or designee before using the outdoor wood-fired furnace.

We hope that any conflicts that arise over nuisance from smoke or burning odor from these outdoor wood-fired furnaces can be resolved within neighborhoods by mutual discussion of the problem and arriving at a workable solution to satisfy all concerns.

Give a
 Birthday
 Membership
 in DCEC
 This Year.

What a
 Perfect
 Gift!

dcec membership application

() \$25 Individual () \$35 Family () \$50 Sustaining
 () \$100 Donor () \$_____ Other () \$15 Student/Limited

This amount would really help! Thanks!

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Door County voter? () yes () no

Township or Municipality: _____

Email: _____ Please email me DCEC alerts:

Summer mailing address, if different:

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Please mail to: DCEC, P.O. Box 114, Fish Creek, WI 54212

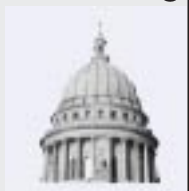


Annual Memberships Renew Soon!

REMINDER: Your membership in DCEC runs with the calendar year with renewals starting every January. *Renewal reminders* will go out in early February. Please renew your membership early, and at as high a membership category as you can afford. Thank you for your support. You are DCEC!

Your Elected Officials

GOVERNOR James Doyle
 115 East State Capitol, Madison WI 53702
 (608) 266-1212 • governor@wisconsin.gov



STATE SENATOR Alan Lasee
 130 South State Capitol, Madison WI 53702
 (608) 266-3512 • Sen.lasee@legis.wisconsin.gov

STATE ASSEMBLY Garey Bies
 125 West State Capitol, Madison WI 53708
 (608) 266-5350 • Rep.bies@legis.wisconsin.gov

US SENATOR Russ Feingold
 505 Hart Senate Bldg., Washington DC 20510-4904
 (202) 224-5323 • russell_feingold@feingold.senate.gov

US SENATOR Herb Kohl
 330 Hart Senate Bldg., Washington DC 20510-4903
 (202) 224-5653 • http://kohl.senate.gov/gen_contact

US CONGRESSMAN Steve Kagen
 1232 Longworth House Office Building
 Washington DC 20515-4908
 (202) 225-5665
http://kagen.house.gov/IMA/issue_subscribe.htm

[Ed. Note: visit <http://www.vote-smart.org> if you don't vote in Door County. Just enter your zip code and they'll display all of your elected representatives with links to detailed fact sheets and contact information about every one]

DCEC'S Leadership

PRESIDENT

Eileen Andera, Sturgeon Bay

1st VICE-PRESIDENT

Jon (Fritz) Renner, Gibraltar

2nd VICE-PRESIDENT

Phyllis Ingwersen, Sister Bay

TREASURER

Bernice Shumway, Sister Bay

SECRETARIES:

Carol Farwell, Ephraim

Carol Sills, Liberty Grove

DIRECTORS

David Boyd, Fish Creek. Steve Eatough, Sister Bay. Robert

Merline, Fish Creek. John Wilson, Baileys Harbor

HONORARY

DIRECTORS

Margaret Cowles, Tony Haswell, James Ingwersen, Flora

Langlois, . Sarah Stuart, John F. Wilson, Karen Wilson, Libby

Zimmerman

STAFF

Executive Director

Jerry Viste, Sturgeon Bay

Membership Coordinator

Ray Kostiuk, Fish Creek





door county
environmental council, inc.
p.o. box 114
fish creek, wi 54212

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fish Creek, WI 54212
Permit No. 15

New Limits on Coal Power Plants Emerald Ash Borer Threat Continues

0109

Is Winter Manure Spreading Becoming a Problem?

If we go back a generation, 30 years or thereabout, we would find policies established that dealt with dairy animal waste in winter that were established by policy makers in the milk marketing district.

As applied to dairy animals under the Chicago Grade A market, waste was required to be field-spread every day, winter or summer, with no storage allowed. This was a common requirement even though it made no sense environmentally and many farmers were able to “avoid” the requirement with remote clandestine storage.

With the transition to larger, concentrated animal facilities, dairy and others, there came a new awareness of problems caused by winter spreading and new concerns over nutrient levels in our waters.

Watershed programs to promote and create proper storage facilities with capacity to hold all animal waste during the entire frozen-ground season became the standard needed to protect ground and surface water from contamination.

Cost sharing by Federal, State and County funds established for that purpose made storage facilities possible at most active farms.

For various reasons, some farm operators have encountered

problems with inadequate storage capacity, malfunctioning equipment and a whole host of other excuses to spread waste during the winter months.



Violations have been noted in the past and in most situations someone had to file a complaint to bring the violation to the attention of the county Soil and Water Department, the local agency that oversees winter spreading practices.

Increasing numbers of residents are objecting to the sheer volume of animal waste that is being applied to farmland throughout the county.

Its odor is ever-present, especially in the liquid storage operations where the manure slurry has to be agitated prior to hauling and field spreading.

A new innovation allows direct injection into the soil with a long hose connected directly to the chisel plow, injecting directly into the soil as it moves about the field. Calculations can be made to prevent excessive waste being applied where there is no nutrient need, but sometimes economic interests prevail.

We appeal to the “better angels” of our modern farming society to ensure that proper waste handling is the rule and that citizen’s concerned over these problems can be addressed.

~JMV

...and, after you read this newsletter, please pass it along to a friend.