

Town of Middleton

FALL ISSUE | 2012 | NEWSLETTER

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CIVIC HAPPENINGS

Property Reassessment is Complete

Thank you for your cooperation with Paul Musser, Town Appraiser as he completes his reappraisal of Town Properties.

The Town's aim is for accuracy, uniformity, and a fairly administered tax system. That said - there still may be questions that result in challenges to the newly assessed value. Those challenges are handled through a process called Open Book meeting with the Assessor. If unable to reach agreement, the next step would be an appearance at the Board of Review session. (See next column.)

Town of Middleton – Meetings Schedule:

Board and committee members are listed on the Town of Middleton website under the link to 'People.'

Town Board	The Town Board meets on the first and third Mondays of each month at 7:00 PM* in the Town Hall.
Plan Committee	The Plan Commission meets on the first Wednesday of the month at 7:00 PM* in the Town Hall.
Parks Committee	The Parks Commission meets on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 PM* in the Town Hall.
Finance Committee	The Finance Committee meets on an ad hoc basis and establishes the subsequent meeting date during each meeting.

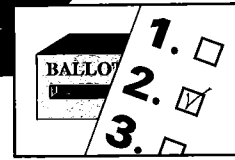
Exceptions may occur around election dates and holidays. Watch for changes at the Town of Middleton website, posted sites, or sign up for emailed information subscription link on the Town website.*

***Official posting sites include kiosks at Town of Middleton, Settlers Prairie Park and Voss Park.*

Open Book/Board of Review

Open Book: Open Book is the best opportunity for you, as a taxpayer, to review your new assessment by setting up a meeting with Paul Musser. After comparing your assessment to others of similar value, you can request a change in valuation by discussing properties that you feel closely match yours but have different property valuations. Open Book valuations available for viewing at the Town Hall. If you feel the newly assessed values are not accurate, schedule an appointment with Paul Musser at a mutually agreed to date and time by calling him at 712-0236.

Board of Review: For those not satisfied with the outcome of the Open Book review an appeal may be made to the Board of Review, comprised of the Town Board. A Board of Review hearing is scheduled for October 8 at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall and generally requires more than one session for Town personnel to complete the research. Before that happens, the requirements for the appeal documentation must be completed. Directions on the appeal process can be found at the Wisconsin Department of Revenue website (www.revenue.wi.gov) that contains the 2012 Property Assessment Appeal Guide. A key responsibility of the property owner is to be prepared to defend your appeal with comparables to your property and/or recent appraisals of your property. After the documentation is completed inform the Town Clerk, David Shaw, of your intent to make an appeal at the Board of Review. This notification must be received at the Town 48 hours in advance of the Board of Review Meeting (noon on Friday October 5).



Election News

General Election: November 6, 2012

The November election results will determine the winning candidates for various federal, state and local contests including the office of President.

Photo ID

As of the writing of this newsletter, the requirement to show Photo ID at polling locations when voting has been stopped by judicial injunction, however the ruling is being appealed by the Wisconsin Department of Justice. Any updated information on Photo ID status will be posted on the Government Accountability Board website (<http://gab.wi.gov>).

Absentee ballot requests

- **By Mail** – absentee ballots requested by mail are sent out as soon as the Town receives paper ballots for a given election or within a business day of receipt. Requests for mailed ballots can be made at any time during the year and can cover a single election or the balance of the calendar year as designated on the request form. Absentee ballot request forms are found at the Government Accountability Board website (<http://gab.wi.gov/forms/gab-121-english>). These forms can be filled out online, printed, signed and mailed (or brought) to Town offices.
- **Voting Absentee in Town Offices** – For the November election the window for in-office voting is October 21 through November 2, 2012 inclusive. Ballots are available during normal business hours with the exception of November 2 when Town hours will be expanded to 5:00 PM.



Town Finances

The Town Board continues to monitor the 2012 budget which is on track with expected revenues and expenses. More information is available on the Town's website. The Board will begin the 2013 Budget discussions on September 24, with additional work sessions on October 2 and October 9. The Public Hearing on the budget is scheduled for November 13.



Home Owner Associations:

Periodically contact information is sought from the various HOAs to forward important communications from state, county or the Town. Please keep the Town up to date with contact information and office holders in your association as they are elected and/or appointed.

What happens to Absentee Ballots?

Questions during recent elections reveal that there is confusion about how absentee ballots are processed. ALL absentee ballots are processed and tallied into the final vote counts on Election Day if received by that date.

On Election Day, absentee ballots never leave the polling place until after being processed by the ballot reader and placed in a sealed ballot bag. During the day, an Election Inspector assumes the role of a proxy for the absentee voter – going to the poll books, obtaining a voter number and placing the ballot into the ballot reader. The processing of absentee ballots involves the efforts of several Election Inspectors during each election cycle.

To ensure all absentee ballots are processed, a log is printed which lists all absentee ballots and their status (issued or returned). The log is matched against absentee ballots before the poll work begins on Election Day and empty envelopes are again matched against the log after the processing of absentee ballots is completed on Election Day.

Mailed ballots not received on or before Election Day may still be counted if received by mail at the Clerk's office by the Friday after the election and postmarked on or before Election Day.

SPRUCING UP THE HOUSE



Fall Bulk Pick Up is September 18-20

Fall bulk pick up will occur on your normally scheduled trash collection date during the week that includes September 18 to 20. As a reminder, items below will NOT be picked up by Veolia ES Solid Waste, Inc. during bulk pickup:

- Anything compostable – *i.e. plant material of any kind.*
- Anything potentially explosive – *i.e. gas, tanks, ammo, fireworks, etc.*
- Anything electronic – *i.e. computers, monitors, TVs, appliances, etc.*
- Anything hazardous – *i.e. mercury, acid, antifreeze, fluorescent bulbs, pesticides, poisons, chemicals of any sort, asbestos, needles, batteries, etc.*
- In addition to the above: *paint, fire extinguishers, auto parts, and hot ashes.*

Disposal of items not accepted by Veolia may be accepted at Dane County Clean Sweep – see their website at www.danecountycleansweep.com.

If you have questions on whether specific items are eligible for pick up, please call Veolia ES Solid Waste, Inc. directly at 251-7878.

Building Permits* – When are they needed?

Needed	Not needed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remodeling and new home construction • HVAC – Furnace/Air Conditioning replacement • ALL electrical work • ALL plumbing work – including water heater and softener replacements • Driveway replacement (no fee) • Decks and additions, out lot buildings • Swimming pools • Sheds on concrete foundations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roof replacement (no changes to existing profile, minimal deck replacement.) • Windows/door replacement (no dimension changes) • Siding replacement • Lot line fencing • Interior/exterior cosmetic work (paint/trim) • Landscaping (prohibited: boulders around culverts/in road right of ways) • Sheds on a foundation of blocks

*Be sure to check with Dane County on zoning permit requirements.

Building Permit Applications are found under the 'Forms' section of the Town website. Contact the Town Inspector, Fred Hankel, with questions (833-4346).

Building Inspector Tip: Mailbox Placement/Structure: There are specific requirements for mailbox placement and structure to meet USPS mail delivery requirements and by the Town with the intent of minimizing damage to mailboxes/town vehicles during snow removal activities. This normally means that the mailbox must be of a height that is easy for the postal worker to deliver mail, back from the road a reasonable distance and able to break away when hit if the support dimensions are larger than a 4 X 4 wood post. More information can be found in two locations:

- USPS Publication 1984-428-503
- Town of Middleton Ordinances (available at the Town Hall)

What can I place in recycling containers?

Veolia ES Solid Waste, Inc. confirms that you can place the following in recycling materials in the containers placed curbside every other week:

- Plastics – numbers 1-7
- Plastic bags (place inside another plastic bag and tied shut to keep them together)
- Empty metal cans – rinsed out
- News print and paper of various kinds
- Cardboard

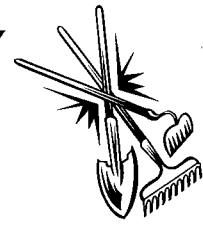
Do not put into recycle carts

- Trash/garbage/rubbish
- Pots or pans
- Plumbing fixtures
- Noxious weeds

Neither recycle carts nor trash carts accept

- Non-noxious brush or plant material
- Anything electronic (with a cord/chip/internal or external electronics)

Note: Veolia picks up e-waste (electronics) by appointment on the 1st and 3rd Friday of every month. There is a separate cost to residents using this service. More information is available by calling 251-7878.



Brush and Small Tree Limb Pick up

The Town Crew's final chipping weeks for the remainder of 2012 begin on the weeks starting **September 3, October 1, and November 5.**

- Have brush out on Monday mornings of chipping weeks.
- Place the trunk ends of limbs (up to 6" diameter) and branches toward the road.
- Gather the materials into armload-sized bundles for easy handling.
- Gather undersized twigs (of pencil size diameter) into paper sacks (not plastic) that will be shredded or on a tarp that will be left behind to ensure a clean pick up.
- Root balls will not be chipped as the dirt dulls the blades of the chipper. Root balls CAN be left at the Town compost site by the designated sign ('Stumps').

Fall Mulching Opportunity

Material from the brush and small limbs are picked up and chipped and made available to town residents for use when completing fall mulch chores.

- This is not commercial quality mulch and includes the wide variety of materials left roadside for the Town Crew to handle.
- Town residents can pick up smaller quantities directly from chipped piles behind the Town Hall or be placed on a list for delivery.
- Only full load quantities of approximately 4 cubic yards are delivered. This represents a materials pile of approximately 6' by 6' by 3'.
- When calling Town Hall for full load quantities (833-5887) to be delivered, be ready to specify the preferred unloading location as viewed from the road.
- Deliveries cannot be scheduled.

Where are composting sites for LARGE amounts of material?

Larger amounts of compost material should be taken directly to the Dane County compost sites at the old Dane County-Verona Landfill adjacent to the Badger Prairie Health Care Center. Other sites are the Westport Site at 5254 State Highway 19 and at the Lake Farm Site at 7102 Highways 12 & 18. For more information regarding composting call 266-4139.

Neither the Town nor Dane County accepts noxious weeds as part of the materials that can be placed in compost locations. Put them in a separate bag labeled "Invasive Plants – Please Landfill" and place in your normal garbage cart.

What do I do with weeds?

Let's start with what **NOT** to do with weeds or other yard waste materials:

- **DO NOT** place material on public land – parks, trails, or property owned/maintained by a public jurisdiction.
- **DO NOT** place them on someone else's vacant property.

The Town would not be making this appeal if these actions weren't happening. Just because the land isn't owner-occupied, is owned by a city or town, or appears to be vacant, it **DOES** belong to someone. Be a responsible citizen and dispose of weeds/limbs/trash responsibly.

Weeds NOT Classified as Noxious: Residents can either use the associated plant matter as compostable material in their yard or bring these materials to the back of the Town Hall, placing the material in a designated compost area. Compostable materials are non-woody leaves, grass and plant clippings.

Weeds Classified as Noxious: This plant material can be placed in with your other trash. Put them in a separate bag labeled "Invasive Plants – Please Landfill."

Woody material: Place curbside for chipping.

If you are unsure what plants are identified as noxious weeds by the DNR, please visit the Town website or the DNR site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/invasives> where photos of the invasive plants are available.

When can I burn leaves?

Burning permits are not required for Town residents. Keep in mind that as a resident you accept responsibility for being able to manage any burn initiated under the weather conditions for the date you are burning as well as complying with all Town ordinances. Be especially sensitive to windy days and be sure to comply with any burn bans in effect.

Burning is prohibited on Saturdays, Sundays and Federal Holidays. The Town makes an exception on the first and third Saturdays in October, November and December to accommodate fall leaves. Burns must start **AFTER 8:00 AM** and be fully extinguished by 3:30 PM and take place on days when the wind speed is below 15 MPH. Additional burn ordinance information can be obtained by contacting the Town Hall. (A copy of the burn ordinance is available at the Town Hall.)

Leaves are not to be placed curbside since the Town does not pick up curbside leaves. An additional reason not to place leaves on a hard surface is that they decompose and phosphate leaches out that is harmful to waterways. Leaves can be composted and are accepted at all Dane County compost sites.



Town Tidbits

- **Town Information:** Keep up to date on events and actions involving the town by signing up for email notifications. Simply click on the '**Subscribe Now**' link from the Town of Middleton website (www.town.middleton.wi.us).
- **Pioneer Park** has a new Bakko Backboard in the tennis courts, allowing players to practice solo.
- **Pioneer Park** has a new charcoal grill installed near the shelter with enough grill space to cook for a crowd.
- **New neighbors** are sent Town information if the Town is alerted to the change in ownership. The packet includes current Town Newsletters, trash schedules, voter registration forms, and more.
- **Park Shelters** can be reserved for Town Residents and their guests. Glass beverage containers are not allowed in Town parks.
- **Town Hall Rental:** The Town Hall can be rented by Homeowner Associations located within the Town for annual meetings. No food or beverages are allowed within the Town Hall. Contact the Town with questions.

General Interest Tidbits

- **ATC Update** – to get the most up to date information on the proposed routing of the ATC lines, check the Town website or the Public Service Commission website (<http://psc.wi.gov>).
- **Gypsy Moths** are seen in late August and September. Only male moths fly; their coloring is primarily brown. Females don't fly, and are white in color. If you are finding significant numbers of moths in your area or adjacent areas, please contact the Town Hall with this information and your address. Without your help an area that should be identified for treatment may be missed.

Safety Tidbits

- **Medication/Drug Disposal** is available at the City of Middleton Police Department, 7341 Donna Drive, Middleton, WI during normal business hours.
- **Well water** should be tested annually, especially in households including pregnant women, infants and young children. For more information on making arrangements for testing, send an email to health@cityofmadison.com or call the PHMDC Laboratory at 243-0357.
- **Carbon Monoxide alarms:** As we approach the winter season, check your home for carbon monoxide alarms. This is a legal requirement regardless of the home's age. At least one alarm is required on each floor level.

Drought impact on groundwater and private wells

Southern Wisconsin is facing severe drought conditions, raising questions about its impact on our groundwater and wells. Survey hydrogeologists respond:

Can the groundwater dry up during periods of drought?

No. Wisconsin's groundwater is not likely to dry up, especially in southern Wisconsin. However, groundwater levels could drop below the pump in a shallow well or in wells in fractured bedrock, such as granite. When this happens, the pump can burn out.

The groundwater level fluctuates based on the amount of water added (precipitation) and the amount removed (wells, springs, streams, and lakes). During dry periods, there is little rainfall to refill the groundwater, but the withdrawals continue. Not too surprisingly, during a drought, the groundwater level will drop.

Why do some peoples' wells have more water than others?

When water is pumped out of a well faster than water can flow back in to replace it, the groundwater level near the well can drop. The rate at which water flows into a well is controlled by the type of sediment or rock it's flowing through. For example, water flows much more quickly through sand than it does through clay.

If groundwater levels near the well are lowered during pumping, a well may run dry even though the surrounding water table is still higher than the well pump.

How would I know if my well is about to run out of water?

Wells that begin to produce cloudy, muddy, or sandy water may be getting low. If your well begins to pump air, if the pump seems to run constantly, or if you notice surging or bubbles in the water the groundwater level might be dropping below the pump. This can damage the pump, so do not continue to run it dry.

If you have specific concerns about your well, your pump, or the water level, it is best to contact a licensed plumber, well driller, or pump installer who has the expertise to evaluate your well.

How do I find out how deep my well is?

Each well in Wisconsin should have a well construction report listing details about well construction, well depth, and water depth. If you or a previous owner had a well drilled on your property, you may have a well construction report provided by the well driller.

Note, though, that pumps are rarely set at the bottom of a well and well construction reports do not report the depth to which the pump in your well was installed. This is the critical depth below which a drop in the water level will cause your well to run dry. If you do not have any records of the pump installation, and you start experiencing trouble with your well, you may need to contact a well installer.

Where can I get more specific information?

For more information, visit the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the United States Geological Survey.

Source: Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Website (<http://wisconsingeologicalsurvey.org>)
For more information on the Drought in Wisconsin go to dnr.wi.gov/topic/forestfire/restrictions.asp.

Deputy's Corner

The Dane County Sheriff's Department continues to handle complaints about "suspicious" activity or persons in a few of the residential areas. More may be going unreported. Here are some tips if you or someone you know witnesses this type of situation.



- If it seems strange to you, it probably is. Call 911 immediately and get a Deputy headed your way.
- If there is a vehicle involved, try and relay as much information about the vehicle to the dispatcher as you can without putting yourself in harm's way. If the vehicle leaves prior to the Deputies arrival, if possible a direction of travel for the car is also helpful.
- If the situation involves people, please provide any physical descriptors that you can safely observe.

Another area of concern is an increase in thefts from vehicles and garages. Please make sure your cars are locked in your driveways and you close and lock your garage doors, especially the small pedestrian door, every night.

Thank you for your diligence in helping to keep the community safe.

If you have any concerns that we can assist you with, please feel free to contact either myself, Deputy Garrett Page at page@co.dane.wi.us or Deputy Mike Mohr at mohr.michael@co.dane.wi.us



Office Hours

Town Offices: 7555 W. Old Sauk Road, Verona, WI 53593
 Town Hours: 8 AM to 4 PM Monday -Thursday
 8 AM to noon - Friday
 Town phone: 833-5887
 Town email: info@town.middleton.wi.us
 Town website: www.town.middleton.wi.us

KEY CONTACT INFORMATION

Dane County Sheriff Dispatch
 Non-emergency _____ 255-2345

Street Light Outages
 MG&E _____ 252-7333
 Alliant _____ 1-800-Alliant

Veolia ES Solid Waste, Inc _____ 251-7878

Animal Control _____ 838-0413

Middleton Fire Department _____ 827-1090
 (Non-emergency)

Middleton EMS Department _____ 827-1040
 (Non-emergency)

Town Building Inspector _____ 833-4346
 (Fred Hankel)

Town Assessor _____ 712-2847
 (Paul Musser)

Well Water Testing _____ 266-4821
 (DHMDC)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DATE	ACTIVITY	TIME	LOCATION
Sept 3	Town Office Closed	Holiday Closing	
Sept 9	Ironman Race		Timber/Midtown Roads
Sept 18-20	Bulk Pick Up	Normal Trash Day	
Sept 24	Town Budget Work Session	7 PM	Town Hall
Oct 2	Town Budget Work Session	7 PM	Town Hall
Oct 9	Town Budget Work Session	7 PM	Town Hall
Oct 27	Extended hours – absentee voting	8 AM to Noon	Town Hall
Nov 5	Final brush chipping week		
Nov 6	General Election	7 AM to 8 PM	Town Hall
Nov 13	Town Budget Public Hearing	7 PM	Town Hall
Nov 22-23	Town Office Closed	Holiday Closing	
Dec 17	Tax bills will be mailed on or before this date		
Dec 24-25	Town Office Closed	Holiday Closing	