

CHAPTER 4 - PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT & PARTICIPATION

Goals & Objectives

Develop a public involvement and participation program to notify the public of activities required by the permit and encourage public input. An active and involved community is important to the success of a stormwater program. A community involved in program development may be less likely to create obstacles and raise legal challenges during implementation. Citizens who participate in the decision making process are partially responsible for the program.

The key to a successful public involvement and participation program is to know your audience and think creatively about how to gain their attention. Traditional methods of soliciting public involvement are not always successful in generating interest. The goal is to involve a diverse group of people who offer a multitude of concerns, ideas, and networking connections.

Program Development

The City joined the Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium (NEWSC) in 2005. NEWSC is a partnership of local municipalities, DNR, UW-Extension, consulting engineers, and vendors. During 2020, the NEWSC membership included approximately 61 different public and private entities. The NEWSC full membership generally meets bi-annually and the NEWSC committees generally meet monthly/quarterly. The NEWSC committees include General Public Committee, Municipal Committee, Building & Development Committee, and Stormwater Quality Management Committee. The group's mission is to facilitate efficient implementation of local stormwater programs by: fostering partnerships, sharing information, seeking administrative efficiencies, and pooling financial resources. During October and November of 2005, NEWSC solicited public involvement by conducting a telephone survey of 403 residents located within Northeast Wisconsin. The purpose of the survey was to involve the public, gauge awareness of stormwater issues, and gather information about local behaviors. A copy of the NEWSC Stormwater Survey is provided in Appendix D.

The City created a Citizens Advisory Board (CAB) to involve the public in development of the local public education program. The CAB met with City Staff and McMahon on May 17, 2007. During the meeting, McMahon provided CAB members with an overview of NR 216 stormwater regulations, identified available resources, facilitated the discussion, and summarized CAB comments. During the meeting, CAB members were asked to rank the importance of each DNR topic based on their understanding of stormwater impacts and public behaviors in the City. CAB members were also asked to identify and rank stormwater 'hot spots' in the City that may pose a stormwater contamination concern. A copy of the CAB rankings are provided in Appendix D.

The City held numerous public meetings during development of the municipal stormwater program. During each meeting, the public was invited to provide input and/or participate in program development. Public education and public involvement occurred for each ordinance, funding source, and stormwater planning activity.

The City created a dedicated funding in the stormwater utility fee to financially support the municipal stormwater program, including public education and outreach. A copy of the City's stormwater utility ordinance is provided in Appendix J.

The City developed various policies and procedures to assist with implementation of the public involvement and participation program. The policies and procedures include the following:

1. The Public Works Director is responsible for implementation of the public involvement and participation program.
2. The City intends to maintain its membership and partnership with the Northeast Wisconsin Stormwater Consortium (NEWSC). The NEWSC partnership and NEWSC Stormwater Survey is part of the City's public involvement plan.
3. The City intends to reconvene the Citizen Advisory Board (CAB) every ±5 years to review the effectiveness of the local public education and outreach program. The CAB is part of the City's public involvement plan.

Program Implementation

Each element of the public involvement and participation program is described in the new Outreach and Education Plan. The Spreadsheet identifies Best Management Practices (BMP), measurable goals, and proposed implementation dates. The proposed BMPs and measurable goals were selected by the City after considering the needs of both the community and receiving waters. The purpose of the measurable goals is to track program implementation and gauge effectiveness of the overall public involvement and participation program.

An additional part of the public involvement and participation program is to gather public input on the Annual MS4 Report, Stormwater Management Plan and any adoption or amendments to stormwater related ordinances. The MS4 Annual report is reviewed with the Board of Public Works at a spring meeting and is posted on the City Website for public comment. The Updates to the Stormwater Management Plan and MS4 Map are also posted on the website. Updates to ordinances are published in the Kaukauna Times Villager in addition to being discussed at Public Meetings, prior to adoption.