

# Vierbicher *Bulletin*

Volume 13, No. 1

Information for Municipal Officials

April 2003

## Storm Water Management Update

### Learning The Value Of Managing Storm Water

As regulations change and new storm water management practices are developed, communities can benefit from the lessons learned by their neighbors.

In a recent survey of Wisconsin communities, Vierbicher Associates, Inc. discovered that storm water management planning, storm water ordinances, storm water utilities and storm water Best Management Practices were the most frequently identified storm water issues needing attention. The experiences other communities have had with these storm water issues provide valuable guidance to anyone needing to deal with these issues.



### Storm Water Management

Mauston, a community of 3,500 along Interstate 90/94 and the Lemonweir River about 75 miles north of Madison, adopted a City-wide storm water management plan in 1997. Vierbicher Associates completed this plan using state grant funding to provide direction to the City officials for establishing policies and prioritizing storm water related projects. In addition, this planning document was valuable because it educated the public, which helped build support from implementing the storm water program.

Director of Public Works Lanny Gleason claims "Justifying expenditures on storm water projects in Mauston is easier with the City Council and with local residents now that we have a long-range plan and a prioritized approach outlined in a detailed report." Any community where flooding occurs or where storm water drains to a sensitive water body, such as the Lemonweir River in Mauston, can benefit from a good storm water management plan. A good storm water management plan should define specific management areas and prioritize the management approach in each area. This prioritized plan then provides the local community officials and residents with a method of directing funds to locations where they receive the greatest benefit. A good storm water management plan also helps leverage state and federal funds to assist with implementing expensive storm water management practices.

### Storm Water Ordinances

Local management of storm water can provide valuable protection of receiving waters. In addition, local issues such as flooding and water quality degradation may be managed better through specific local ordinances instead of relying on standardized federal or state regulations.

The Town of Onalaska discovered the value of local ordinances when county, state and federal regulations did not provide the level of protection from development expected by the local residence.

### *Storm Water Survey Results*

A recent survey, conducted by Vierbicher Associates, showed that over 50% of communities are proposing to implement storm water management activities in the next two years. Specific activities (in order of frequency proposed) include:

1. Storm Water Management Plans
2. Storm Water Ordinance
3. Storm Water Utilities
4. Erosion Control Ordinance
5. Detention Basins
6. Adopt Impact Fees
7. Water Quality Monitoring
8. State & Federal Grants
9. Public Education Program



**VIERBICHER**  
ASSOCIATES  
*Committed to Quality Service Since 1976*

## Storm Water Utilities

Managing storm water and building and maintaining storm sewer systems requires a healthy budget. As state and federal funding sources decline, communities must rely more heavily on local sources of money. Many communities are developing storm water utilities to provide a consistent source of funds dedicated to storm water management.

In the Village of Bellevue, just southeast of Green Bay, Vierbicher Associates helped create a storm water utility that is providing the Village with a reliable source of funding to construct and maintain storm sewers and drainageways, to clean streets and storm sewer catch basins, and to hire staff to inspect development and enforce local regulations. Former Village Administrator Todd Taves says "There were few objections to our new storm water utility because the Village had an excellent public education and information program that clearly explained the equitable fee structure and benefits from the utility. Now the Village has a consistent source of dedicated funding that enables them to budget storm water management activities on a multi-year basis." After its first full year of operation, Bellevue's storm water utility is functioning as anticipated. The operation and administration of the utility requires about a one-quarter time person. The utility serves about 3,800 customers and has an annual budget of \$530,000. Other communities can receive similar benefits of a consistent, dedicated source of funding by creating a storm water utility.



## Storm Water Best Management Practices

Planning, designing and implementing Best Management Practices (BMPs) to mitigate storm water problems can be confusing. What practices provide the greatest benefit and where are the best locations to install them? Selecting the most appropriate BMPs will help ensure the biggest benefit for the lowest cost.

In the Village of DeForest, local flooding was a serious problem before Vierbicher Associates helped create a large storm water detention basin upstream from the Village. Previously, considerable adjacent farmland drained through the Village and overwhelmed the storm sewer system. Once this storm water run off was detained upstream from the Village, it reduced the frequency and magnitude of flooding and substantially reduced the amount of sediment in storm sewer catch basins. Village Clerk Carol Millard says "My phone rings much less after rain storms since we built the Bakke and Yankee detention basins." Your community might realize significant benefits from an appropriate storm water BMP. Whether you have flooding problems, erosion and sedimentation concerns, or an important water resource that needs protection, the correct BMP in the right location can help.

## *Funding Is Available!*

Numerous funding programs are available to assist with planning and implementation of storm water management programs.

Many of these programs are new. If your community will be undertaking a storm water project, you should investigate the availability of public funding. Please feel free to contact Vierbicher Associates for more information on funding programs.

## *Vierbicher Can Help!*

Vierbicher Associates, Inc., offers substantial storm water management experience. Our in-house capability includes water resource engineers, water resource planners, hydrogeologists, GIS specialists, surveyors, grant writers, and Tax Incremental Financing specialists. This wide range of expertise allows us to develop creative solutions for complex storm water issues.

For more information on Storm Water Management contact:  
**Joseph M. Dorava, PE,**  
800-261-6468, [jdor@vierbicher.com](mailto:jdor@vierbicher.com)

*Click on [www.vierbicher.com](http://www.vierbicher.com)  
to learn more about our firm!*

©2003 Vierbicher Associates, Inc.



Engineering, Architecture, Planning, Community Development, Surveying, GIS, Environmental, Water Resources

400 Viking Drive, P.O. Box 379  
Reedsburg, WI 53959  
(608) 524-6468

6200 Mineral Point Road  
Madison, WI 53705-4504  
(608) 233-5800

P.O. Box 650  
Schofield, WI 54476-0650  
(715) 359-2003

P.O. Box 542  
Prairie du Chien, WI 53821-0542  
(608) 326-1051

[www.vierbicher.com](http://www.vierbicher.com)