

Water Star Sponsored by:

Rock River Coalition
Town and Country R, C, & D
UW Cooperative Extension
UW Environmental Resources Center
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Dane County
MSA Professional Services

Two Ways to Become a Sponsor

- Be a member of the Water Star Steering Committee in good standing.
- Provide \$500 or more in inkind or cash support.

Sponsors names will be on media releases, will be invited to assist with presentations of certificates and signs to Water Star Communities and will be invited to all events, webinars, and programs.

Name, logo and link will be on the Water Star Home Page.

Be a Water Star Endorser

Sign on as an endorser to the program on the Water Star Website. Your name will be added to the endorser list on the website and may be used in publicity efforts.

Anyone can endorse whether you are an individual, organization or business

For More Information

Go to www.wisconsinwaterstar.org or call Suzanne Wade, UW-Extension Rock River Basin Educator and Water Star Coordinator at 920-674-8972 or by email to waterstar@rockrivercoalition.org

What is Water Star Community Program

This new program was designed to honor municipalities who are providing their citizens, businesses and themselves with safe and abundant groundwater; surface water protected from the impacts of stormwater and development; and are maintaining good habitat while still providing safe recreational opportunities.

Starting on the 40th anniversary of Earth Day it will celebrate the work that top municipalities of all sizes have been doing over the last half century to protect and improve their water resources.

Meeting today's groundwater and surface water needs is a tremendous challenge taking careful, thoughtful decision-making, significant resources, and working through challenging and diverse opinions.

Water Star Community believes those municipalities who have overcome these challenges should be thanked and celebrated.

Why Become a Water Star Community?

First to be publicly recognized for your good work.

Second to promote your community as a responsible unit of government and a good place for people to live and businesses to locate.

Water Star Communities will receive:

One entrance sign for their community with more available for a fee.

Electronic files of the logo and other promotional materials for their website and for print materials.

Listed as a Water Star Community on the Water Star website.

Guidance on how to improve their ratings and move up the Water Star rankings.



Guiding, Inspiring and Recognizing

Municipalities for exemplary work in:

Surface Water

Groundwater

Recreation and Health

Register your municipality starting April 22, 2010 and find out if you are a:

GOLD Water Star Community

SILVER Water Star Community

BRONZE Water Star Community

at

<http://www.waterstarwisconsin.org>

Who Can Become A Water Star Community?

Water Star is being set up as for all sizes of municipalities: cities, villages, counties and towns.

We recognize that larger villages, cities and towns will have an easier time meeting the requirements to be designated a Water Star. The Water Star Steering Committee is interested in working with smaller and more rural municipalities to make this program work for them.

Minimum Requirements

1. The municipality can not be in default of any permits, or have a history of being in default of its stormwater, wastewater or public water supply permits
2. It can not have a history of land use decisions that are counter to the protection of groundwater or surface water.
3. A Water Star Community must write at least one success story highlighting their accomplishments.

Water Star Certification must be renewed every 3 years.

Recognizing the Differences in Wisconsin Municipalities

Every municipality is different, groundwater might be abundant or scarce. It might have natural or human-caused contamination. One municipality might have an abundance of surface water resources and another limited. Counties don't run wastewater treatment plants and some cities don't have public water utilities.

Water Star recognizes these differences. The online application form will allow each municipality to only answer questions that apply to their situation and their final score is based on a percentage of possible points.

If a municipality has a unique issue or has worked in an unusual way to protect their natural resources they can add to the application getting full credit for their response to the situation.

The Importance to Wisconsin of Water Star

Many facets add up to make a community a Water Star. Here are the four basic components of Water Star and why they've been included in the Water Star Community Program

Surface Water

Quality - Lakes, rivers and streams throughout Wisconsin suffer from poor water quality. Keeping pollutants out of the runoff is critical to a healthy lake or river. Keeping pollutants out of water is cheaper and better for all than trying to remove it later.

Quantity- Historically 4% of rain water washed off into lakes, streams and rivers. Now in urban areas more than 35-80% runs off with great speed and force greatly changing the environment. Even in rural areas water runs off much quicker than it did in the past due to ditches and tiling.

Habitat - Draining wetlands, straightening streams, concreting drainage areas, removal of instream and lake vegetation and woody debris, along with sedimentation and dredging has resulted in significantly less good habitat for fish and wildlife.

Groundwater

Quality - Human and natural contaminants impact drinking water in many areas of Wisconsin. Actions can be taken to protect drinking water quality, and where the contamination is naturally occurring, to protect the consumers of that water.

Quantity- Wisconsin is a water-rich state, however in some areas due to excess pumping of groundwater or do to low-water bearing rock, there isn't enough groundwater for human-use without negatively impacting streams, wetlands, or springs

Recreation

A healthy community provides recreational opportunities to its citizenry while protecting the natural resources that people enjoy and desire.

Human Health

Humans can get sick or die from contaminants in our groundwater and in our surface water such as e coli, a bacteria, or the toxin released by blue-green algae.

How to Apply

Starting April 22, 2010 a municipality can register and begin the application process

Since the application covers all aspects of municipal government, we've set it up the application so different people can fill in different parts of the survey. Thus any person can go in and fill in their portion of the application, such as the public works, planning and parks directors when its convenient.

The application is expected to take about 2.5 hours to complete in total.

Once completed the municipality will receive a preliminary computer generated rating. The computer will notify the Water Star Coordinator who will insure that the application meets the minimum requirements and will contact the municipality to inform them of the final results.

If the applicant meets Gold Water Star standards a random audit of the actions will be performed to insure that the application truly meets this standard.

A Water Star Designation Ceremony will be scheduled where the certificate will be presented to the municipality, along with an aluminum entry sign, by a sponsor of Water Star.

Actions Ranked and Prioritized

Water Star is composed of more than 130 actions, many with sub-actions, organized under typical municipal department headings such as public land management or drinking water utilities. Each action or sub-action is given a rating of Critical, Important or Enhancement depending on how directly it can impact the resource.

Each action is also given a point scale depending on the amount of time and resources required to implement the action.

The municipality will answer each question with a yes, do not do, or not applicable. There are generally a sliding scale for yes answers allowing credit for moving toward full completion of the action.