

# COMPASS POINTS

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER: VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

JUNE 2011

## PHRAGMITES??

*Phragmites* (aka Common Reed Grass) is a tall, warm season perennial grass with featherlike plumes at the top of its stems. It can reach heights of 8-12 feet. In Kenosha, *Phragmites* is most commonly found in disturbed areas with altered hydrology or sedimentation, such as roadside ditches, wetlands downhill from active farm fields, and farmed wetlands that have been left fallow.

Invasive *Phragmites* is a subspecies known as *Phragmites australis* subsp. *australis*, and is closely related to the native subspecies *americanus*, the two are very difficult to tell apart. Invasive *Phragmites* is an aggressive plant that easily outcompetes native species for water and nutrients; it secretes toxins from its roots into the soil which impede the growth of and even kills off neighboring plant species. While invasive *Phragmites* prefers areas of standing water, its roots can grow to extreme lengths, allowing it to survive in areas with lower water levels by reaching groundwater that is deep below-ground.

The most effective management plan for most *Phragmites* situations includes a combination of herbicide application, cutting/rolling, and prescribed burning, following very strict timelines. Success depends on a number of factors, and complete eradication of invasive *Phragmites* is rarely achieved after one treatment. Annual visits and touch up control work will likely be required for a few years after initial treatment takes place.

If herbicide application and/or prescribed burning strategies are used it is very important that all necessary permits are obtained and regulations followed. When controlling or removing invasive *Phragmites*, care should always be taken to minimize disturbance, and cause as little damage as possible to native vegetation and wildlife.

The Southeastern Wisconsin Invasive Species Consortium (SEWISC) will be conducting a roadside invasive species survey this summer in Kenosha County to collect baseline information on the location and stand size of three invasives: Common Reed Grass, Common & Cut-leaved Teasel, and Japanese Knotweed. The information will guide future eradication efforts.



Exotic *Phragmites* stems are tough and dull with ridges (top). Native *Phragmites* stems are smooth and shiny and have dark spots (bottom).

### ONLINE RESOURCES

<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/water/greatlakes/Phragmites2007.pdf>

<http://www.invasiveplants.net/phragmites/>

<http://www.botany.wisc.edu/wisflora/>

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### PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT CALENDAR 2011

#### JUNE

2	Zoning Board of Adjustments Hearing Room A, 6 pm
8	Planning, Development & Extension Education Committee Public Hearing Room, 6:30 pm
16	Zoning Board of Adjustments Hearing Room A, 6 pm
18	Kenosha Dairy Breakfast Weis Farm (21000 15th Street, Union Grove), 6:30 am - 10 am

#### JULY

7	Zoning Board of Adjustments Hearing Room A, 6 pm
13	Planning, Development & Extension Education Committee Public Hearing Room, 6:30 pm
21	Zoning Board of Adjustments Hearing Room A, 6 pm
29	Kenosha County Men's County Open — Brighton Dale Links
30	For more information, visit:
31	<a href="http://www.golfbrightondale.com">www.golfbrightondale.com</a>

#### AUGUST

4	Zoning Board of Adjustments Hearing Room A, 6 pm
10	Planning, Development & Extension Education Committee Public Hearing Room, 6:30 pm
18	Zoning Board of Adjustments Hearing Room A, 6 pm

Unless otherwise indicated, all events are at the Kenosha County Center (19600 75th Street, Bristol)

## SEPTIC TANKS: DO'S & DON'T'S



### DO'S

- Have your treatment tank pumped and system inspected by a licensed waste hauler every three (3) years.
- Keep your own records of pumping, inspections, maintenance and repairs of your Private Onsite Waste Treatment System (POWTS).
- Practice water conservation in your household. Be particularly aware of leaking or running toilets, dripping faucets and discharges to your system that do not need to be directed to your POWTS.
- Know the location of your POWTS on your property and all its components. You can obtain a site plan of your system from the Kenosha County Department of Planning and Development.
- Keep a healthy grass cover over your dispersal cell(s).
- Do laundry over the whole week and especially avoid periods of high wastewater flow while doing laundry.
- Run dishwashers and clothes washers only when full, utilizing the lowest number of rinse cycles. Also utilize a time delay start if available to run these machines during off-peak water usage times.
- Use baking soda to clean toilets and sinks and boiling water and a plumber's snake to clear clogged drains.
- Divert all the down spouts, surface water run off, snow melt and sump pump discharges from all areas of your POWTS.
- Have a manually cleaned lint trap installed on the discharge line of your automatic washer.



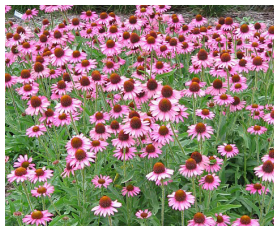
### DON'TS

- Don't use septic tank additives – human waste has plenty of bacteria and microorganisms to do a proper digestion in a septic tank. Most additives are enzyme based and allow suspended solids and carbon to flow out of a septic tank and clog the soil in the dispersal cell(s).
- Don't use your Private Onsite Waste Treatment System (POWTS) as a trash can. Avoid flushing grease, oils, fats, plastics, cigarette butts, kitty litter, tampons, condoms, diapers, caustic chemicals, medications, paints, thinners, moist towelettes, etc. Be skeptical to products that claim they are "septic safe."
- Don't use garbage disposals excessively. Compost your food waste if possible or dispose into the garbage. Undigested food in a septic tank requires a tremendous amount of bacterial action to break it down.
- Don't allow backwash salt brine from a water softener or any other water treatment device to discharge to your POWTS. These discharges can hold high amounts of sodium, iron, and other soluble salts that may be harmful to your system.
- Don't use large amounts of laundry detergents, fabric softeners, bleaches, toilet bowl cleaners, drain cleaners, and anti-bacterial cleaners and soaps. These will kill bacteria in your septic tank.
- Don't allow anyone to park or drive cars, trucks or heavy equipment over any part of your POWTS.
- Don't plant trees or any woody plants over any portion of your POWTS. There are many species of trees and shrubs that will establish their root systems into all of the components of the POWTS.
- Don't ever enter a septic tank. Sewer gases can contain significant amounts of methane and cyanide gas which are lethal.

## WATCH THE TEST GARDEN GROW



Batisia x bicolor - "starlite"



Echinacea Pixie Meadowbright™

"Wow, that plant is beautiful, I want one in my yard." "I didn't know hazelnuts were native to Kenosha County." These are just a couple comments from visitors and employees about the garden at the Kenosha County Center in Bristol.

Four years ago, Master Gardener Volunteers and Barb Larson, Kenosha County UW-Extension horticulture educator began renovating the entrance bed and landscape plantings on the north side of County Center. Plant combinations are eclectic because Larson receives new varieties of perennial flowers and shrubs to trial. "We often get four to five types of Proven Winners shrubs and 8 to 12 Blooms by Bressingham perennials," states Larson. "It's a great way to see new varieties a year before they are available at the garden center." Each type of plant has a label with the plant name and other basic information.

Larson adds, "Late last summer we were very excited to begin a collaboration with Roy Diblik of Northwind Perennial Farm. Seven varieties of sedge were planted and will be evaluated for their use as a landscape plants. This is a great impetus to expand the garden."



## REQUIREMENTS FOR RESIDENTIAL SWIMMING POOLS

It's that time of year again, and soon the summer sun will be out in full force. If you're thinking about constructing or installing a pool on your property, here is some helpful information!

### When is a permit required?

The Kenosha County General Zoning and Shoreland/Floodplain Zoning Ordinance requires a zoning permit to be issued in order to proceed with the construction, enlargement or alteration of any private residential swimming pool in unincorporated areas of the county.



A swimming pool is defined as any structure, portable or permanent, containing a body of water 18 inches or more in depth, intended for recreational purposes, including a wading pool, but not including an ornamental reflecting pool or fish pond or similar type. In-ground, above-ground, temporary inflatable/metal frame soft-sided pools, as well as hot tubs and spas are included under this definition. In other words:



**Yes**



**Yes**



**Yes**



**Yes**



**No**

### What Safety Features are Required?

No swimming pool can be installed or maintained unless:

- For an in-ground pool: you must erect and maintain a good quality safety fence not less than four feet in height completely surrounding the pool or surrounding the yard in which the pool is located.
- For an above-ground pool, one of the following must be met:
  1. Erect and maintain a safety fence to the same specifications as above; or
  2. The total wall height of the pool and surrounding deck/railing must be at least six feet above yard grade.
- For a spa or hot tub, a locked safety cover may be used, or the spa must be completely enclosed in a structure with locking windows and doors.

The safety fencing must be constructed so that there are no holes or openings larger than four inches.

When you are not present, every gate in the safety fence must be kept securely closed and locked at all times. Gates must be equipped with self-closing and self-latching devices.

The swimming pool cannot be filled with water until all safety features are in place.

### What is the process?

- If applicable, check with your homeowners association to verify if a pool is permitted in your community.
- Gather all of the necessary documents.
- Apply for and acquire the required county zoning permit.
- Apply for and acquire the required town building permit.
- Construct the pool and related safety features.
- Call for the required inspections prior to concealing work.

### What documents do I need?

- Plot Plan – showing the proposed distances from the pool to all property lines, nearby buildings and well and septic system, if applicable. The plan must comply with county's setback requirements. A survey plat with the pool location or a to-scale hand sketch showing the pool location with respect to the property lines and other property improvements is acceptable.
- Construction drawings – drawings for pools must describe the size of the proposed pool footprint and in the case of an above-ground pool should describe pool wall height.

### What permits do I need?

You will first need to apply for and receive a zoning permit from the Kenosha County Department of Planning & Development. Secondly, you will need to apply for and receive a building permit from your local township office.

**For more information, please visit:**  
**<http://www.kenoshacounty.org/plandev/>**

## COUNTY SPOTLIGHT: DIVISION OF GOLF PETRIFYING SPRINGS & BRIGHTON DALE LINKS



Summer has finally arrived, and Kenosha County's two championship golf courses are ready. The Golf Division aims to provide country club conditions in municipal courses that can be enjoyed by all residents and visitors. Golf also strives to ensure that the county courses offer a range of challenges and costs to meet the skills and needs of every golfer.

Located in the flagship county park and this year celebrating its 75th anniversary, Petrifying Springs Golf Course is an 18-hole course featuring 5,979 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par of 70. This course was named the #1 Sporty Course in Wisconsin by Gary D'Amato (*Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel*), and continues to be one of the most popular recreational destinations in the county.

Brighton Dale Links is a 45-hole complex, comprised of three separate tracts: White Birch and Blue Spruce are 18-hole, par 72 layouts that measure over 6,900 and 6,600 yards, respectively; Red Pine is a 9-hole, par 36 layout of over 3,500 yards. Located adjacent to the Richard Bong State Recreational Area, this course features a unique abundance and variety of natural beauty.

If you're looking to improve your game, private lessons with professional instructors are available. The Golf Division also has clinics scheduled at both Petrifying Springs and Brighton Dale Links for juniors and women throughout the summer.

And if you're not a golfer, you can still enjoy the fish fry's offered at both courses' clubhouses every Friday throughout the summer.

For more information, including upcoming events and specials, please visit the Kenosha County Golf website: <http://www.kenoshacountygolf.com>



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: PERMITTING

### Does the County issue permits for piers and other structures placed on the bed of a body of water?

The Kenosha County Department of Planning and Development does not issue permits for piers or other structures located below the ordinary high water mark. For these issues we suggest contacting the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources at their website: <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/waterways/recreation/piers.html>, or Kathy Kramasz at (920) 892-8756 x 3031.

### Can I have a boathouse on my property?

A boathouse is an accessory use used strictly for the storage of boats and water related recreational accessories to be used by the owner or occupant of the parcel. One boathouse is permitted for each property fronting on navigable bodies of water having riparian rights.

Boathouse requirements are listed in the accessory buildings section of the Kenosha County General Zoning and Shoreland/Floodplain Zoning Ordinance.

## UPCOMING DATES TO NOTE

### KENOSHA COUNTY FARMERS MARKETS: VARIOUS

Enjoy locally grown food and support local farmers! For a full list of market locations and hours, visit the Farm Fresh Atlas of Southeastern Wisconsin: <http://www.farmfreshatlas.org/southeast/>

### KENOSHA COUNTY FAIR: AUGUST 17 - 21, 2011 (8 AM - MIDNIGHT)

The Kenosha County Fair will be held from 8 am to midnight, Wednesday through Sunday, August 17-21, at the Wilmot fairgrounds (30820 111th St.), featuring food, entertainment, carnival rides, and judging of animals, photography, crafts and more. For more info, visit: <http://www.kenoshacofair.com/>



### Kenosha County Department of Planning and Development

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<http://kenoshacounty.org/plandev>

*The mission of the Kenosha County Department of Planning and Development is to encourage the use of land, water resources and structures in a planned and orderly manner through technology, Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and its base mapping and various ordinances, which promotes sound planning and land use management, environmental awareness and public participation to protect the overall public health, safety, morals, prosperity, aesthetics, comfort, convenience and general welfare of the citizens of Kenosha County as well as providing professional planning assistance to other departments within Kenosha County government.*