

CHAPTER 31
UNIFORM ADDRESSING SYSTEM

- 31.01 GENERAL PROVISIONS
- 31.02 FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS OF UNIFORM ADDRESSING SYSTEM
- 31.03 ADDRESS NUMBER ASSIGNMENTS
- 31.04 ADDRESS SIGNAGE
- 31.05 MAINTENANCE
- 31.06 ROAD AND HIGHWAY NAMING STANDARDS
- 31.07 ROAD AND HIGHWAY SIGNAGE
- 31.08 ADMINISTRATION
- 31.09 FEES
- 31.10 ENFORCEMENT
- 31.11 DEFINITIONS

Adopted 3-18-2020

31.01 GENERAL PROVISIONS

(1) AUTHORITY

This chapter is adopted pursuant to the authority granted under §§59.54(4) and (4m), Wis. Stats.

(2) TITLE

This ordinance shall be known as, referred to, and may be cited as the “Pepin County Uniform Addressing System Ordinance” and is hereinafter referred to as the “ordinance”.

(3) PURPOSE

The purpose of this ordinance is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the general public of Pepin County by providing a means for effectively and efficiently locating properties and structures located in the unincorporated areas of the County. The primary and vital purpose of a uniform addressing system is to aid in fire protection, emergency services, and civil defense, and to provide the means and standards for the location of residences and businesses by law enforcement, fire departments, first responders and other emergency service providers, mail, delivery services, utilities, travelers, and others dependent on timely responding to locations throughout the County.

It is the intent of this ordinance to define policies and administrative procedures related to the naming of roads and highways, signing of roads and highways, assigning of addresses, location of address signs, and ongoing maintenance of the uniform addressing system. It is further intended to provide for review and acceptance of all private and public road and highway names in order to ensure compatibility with the county’s computer aided dispatch system.

(4) JURISDICTION

The provisions of this ordinance shall apply to all unincorporated areas of Pepin County, including, without limitation, to all highways, roads, addressable structures, and addressable parcels. Incorporated areas of the County are exempt from this section unless otherwise indicated in an intergovernmental agreement.

(5) ABROGATION AND GREATER RESTRICTIONS

It is not intended by this ordinance to repeal, abrogate, annul, impair, or interfere with any existing ordinances, rules, or regulations adopted by Pepin County. However, wherever this ordinance imposes greater restrictions, the provisions of this ordinance shall govern.

(6) SEVERABILITY

If any section, clause, provision, or portion of this ordinance is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

This ordinance shall not create liability on the part of, or cause action against, Pepin County or any office or employee thereof for any damages that may result from reliance on this ordinance.

(7) EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall be effective upon adoption by the Pepin County Board of Supervisors and shall take effect as of the date of adoption.

31.02 FOUNDATIONAL ELEMENTS OF UNIFORM ADDRESSING SYSTEM

Pepin County has maintained a uniform addressing system since 1995. The uniform addressing system is comprised of and subject to the following general terms and conditions, upon which all official address numbers within the County are determined and assigned:

- (1) Grid System. The official uniform addressing system of Pepin County is the grid system as established in 1995; the grid system was established to align with section lines.
- (2) Address Number Determination. The grid system established allows for 400 address numbers per mile of roadway or section, which is equivalent of one address number every 13.2 feet. An address number designates the intersection point of a driveway centerline with a public road or highway. Address numbers are derived from measurements taken from the north or west grid section with the result adjusted to correspond to the side of the road or highway the subject driveway and property are located on.
- (3) Even/Odd Address Number Determination. All addressable structures and addressable parcels located on the east side of north-south roadways or highways and all addressable structures and addressable parcels located on the north side of east-west roadways or highways shall be assigned even numbers. All addressable structures and addressable parcels located on the west side of north-south roadways or highways and all addressable structures and addressable parcels located on the south side of east-west roadways or highways shall be assigned odd numbers. Address numbers shall increase as they go north or west across the county; all numbers must be sequential. Roads and highways that loop or circle may be addressed in a manner that keeps the even numbers on one side of the road or highway and odd numbers on the other side of the road or highway in order to avoid alternating in the even/odd designations on the same side of the road or highway.

- (4) Address Prefix Determination. All address numbers assigned to a north-south roadway shall be preceded by an “N”. All address numbers assigned to east-west roadways shall be preceded by a “W”. In cases where the road or highway switches direction of travel, the Master Street Address Guide (MSAG) should be referenced to verify the prefix assigned to specific segments of the roadway.

31.03 ADDRESS NUMBER ASSIGNMENTS

Every property containing an addressable structure or that is an addressable parcel under the jurisdiction of this ordinance shall have an assigned address number. The department shall be responsible for assigning all address numbers in accordance with this ordinance, including, without limitation satisfaction of each of the following conditions:

- (1) A property owner must apply for an address number, and an address number must be assigned, prior to the issuance by the County or a town of any land use or building permits for said property.
- (2) Property owners shall provide a copy of their driveway permit with their address application.
- (3) Upon issuance of an address number, the department will notify the affected property owner, the town in which the property is located, the Pepin County Sheriff’s Office, emergency responders, and the local post office of the official address number.
- (4) The address number assigned by the department to a property shall be the official address number for said property and shall replace any prior address number used.
- (5) There shall be no duplication of address numbers assigned to properties located along the same road or highway.
- (6) Properties with more than one single family residence shall have a separate address number for each residence.
- (7) Industrial or business complexes shall be assigned one address number with extensions given for individual units.
- (8) Multifamily dwellings of more than two units shall be assigned one address number with extensions assigned for each unit. Multifamily dwellings shall have distinct markings adjacent to the door to identify the individual unit.
- (9) Mobile home parks or campgrounds shall be assigned one “main address number” along with a unique number identifying each individual lot. The landowner and/or proprietor shall be responsible for ensuring that each lot/site number is clearly marked. Lot numbers can be placed on the front of the unit if it is facing and clearly visible from the roadway. Lot numbers may also be placed on a post within 5-10 feet of the unit driveway and facing the roadway.
- (10) Unit and lot numbers shall be numerals and not alphabetical letters spelling the number. Numbers shall be fully reflective with a height of not less than 2 ½ inches high, black in color, screened on a white background. Unit and lot numbers shall be clearly visible from the roadway.

- (11) Assignment of vanity addresses shall not be permitted under any circumstances. A vanity number is an address number and/or road or highway name bearing the letters or numbers designated by the owner or tenant, which are not consistent with the address number and/or road or highway system name established by this ordinance.
- (12) Address numbers shall be assigned according to where the access driveway intersects with the public or private road or highway based on the Pepin County grid system.
- (13) If the location of an existing driveway access point changes, the owner shall submit a new address application to the department.
- (14) An official address number that exists at the time of adoption of this ordinance, but does not comply with all of the provisions and requirements of this ordinance, may be permitted to remain the official address number for a property by the department, provided that all of the following requirements are met:
 - a. The department has a completed address application for the property in its records; and
 - b. The department determines that the effect of approving the existing official address number to remain the property's official address number would not adversely affect the health, safety and general welfare of the public.

A nonconforming address number permitted to remain an official address number under the provisions of this Subsection (14) shall be known as an "existing nonconforming address number."

- (15) Any address number not documented as being an official address number shall be deemed void and an official address number shall be assigned by the department staff and fees paid by the property owner according to the provisions of this ordinance.
- (16) Incorrect address number assignments, which may be due to incomplete or incorrect information on the address application or an error on the part of the person issuing the address number, shall be corrected immediately.
- (17) If an existing official address number, including, without limitation, an existing nonconforming address number, is discovered to have been incorrectly assigned and results in public safety concerns or delay of emergency services, the official address number shall be changed in order to comply with the provisions of this ordinance.
- (18) In all cases, when an address sign for an existing nonconforming address number needs replacement, including, without limitation, when an address sign no longer conforms to the standards set forth under this ordinance, and as otherwise determined by the department, a new address number shall be assigned and an address sign obtained in compliance with the provisions of

this ordinance and the existing nonconforming address number shall become null and void.

- (19) In the event that a property with an existing nonconforming address number is transferred or conveyed to a new property owner the existing nonconforming address number shall become null and void. Upon a transfer or conveyance, the new property owner shall submit an address application to the department and the department shall assign a new address number to the property, and a new address sign must be obtained, in compliance with the provisions of this ordinance.
- (20) Address numbers assigned to public roadways or highways that are altered or discontinued by resolution of municipality in accordance with Chapter 82.12, Wis. Stats. or private roadways that are decommissioned or expanded may be modified at the time of their retirement or expansion to reflect updated changes to the Master Street Address Guide (MSAG).
- (21) Any existing address sign that is not a valid address sign conforming to the standards set forth in this ordinance shall be removed.

31.04 ADDRESS SIGNAGE

- (1) Every addressable structure and addressable parcel must have an address sign displayed pursuant to this Section 31.04. The address sign shall consist of a sign blade, which is mounted on a signpost with associated hardware.
 - a. All sign blades shall have a red background.
 - b. New address signs issued after the adoption of this ordinance shall be double-sided.
 - c. Numbers, letters and the background of the sign blade shall be fully reflective.
 - d. The town name shall be displayed on the top of the address sign in white, in no less than 1-inch lettering.
 - e. The roadway or highway name shall be displayed on the bottom of the address sign in white in no less than 1-inch lettering.
 - f. The address number shall be displayed in letters of 4 inches in height.
 - g. Address signs shall be manufactured to accommodate 2 attachment bolts.
- (2) The property owner shall be responsible for the physical placement of the address sign in accordance with the following standards:
 - a. Address signs shall be mounted on a on steel fence post driven so that the sign is no less than 42 inches and no more than 54 inches above the ground surface.
 - b. Address signs shall be installed so that they are perpendicular to the roadway or highway and highly visible from both directions of travel.

- c. Address signs shall be located on the right side of the driveway, as the driveway is viewed from the public roadway or highway, whenever possible.
- d. Address signs shall be located within ten feet of the road or highway right-of-way and within 5-10 feet from the driveway serving the addressed property.
- e. Mailboxes shall not be used to mount address signs.
- f. Digger's Hotline shall be contacted before installation of any address sign.

31.05 MAINTENANCE

It shall be the responsibility of the property owner to maintain all address signs for their property in accordance with the standards set forth in Section 31.04. Maintenance includes replacement of address sign, repairs, reinstallation, and keeping the address sign(s) in a physical condition whereby the address number is easily and clearly legible at any time. The property owner shall also ensure the address sign is clearly visible from the public road or highway and not obscured by vegetation, structures, snow, etc.

There shall be no requirement to replace legally existing address signs that are in adequate condition. As address signs become damaged, disappear or deteriorate, they shall be replaced in accordance with Section 31.04.

31.06 ROAD AND HIGHWAY NAMING STANDARDS

The following uniform criteria are established for naming all highways and roads in the unincorporated areas of Pepin County.

- (1) U.S. and State Highways – All U.S. and State Highways shall be numbered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.
- (2) County Highways – County highways, which are presently designated by letter by Pepin County, shall retain the designation in place as of the effective date of this ordinance. The Pepin County Board of Supervisors shall name new county highways or change county highway designations pursuant to §83.025, Wis. Stats. County highway signs shall read "COUNTY ROAD "letter"".
- (3) Other public highways and roads. All existing public town roads and highways may retain the designation in place as of the effective date of this ordinance. Towns may choose to rename existing town roads and highways in accordance with the standards set forth below and with the assistance of the department. All new public town roads and highways shall be named by the corresponding town by resolution under the following terms and conditions:
 - a. All public "through" town roads and highways shall end using a suffix of "RD"
 - b. All public or private "dead end" roads and highways shall end using a suffix of "CIR" (circle), "CT" (court), "DR" (drive) or "LN" (lane).
 - c. New road and highway names crossing the boundary from one municipality into another, or a new road or highway that is an extension from an existing

road or highway, shall bear the same name. *Note: It is strongly encouraged that municipalities having current roads or highways that continue into adjoining municipalities mutually agree on the naming or renaming of those roads or highways as soon as possible.*

- d. A new road or highway name shall not be duplicated with other existing road and highway names.
 - e. The name of a proposed public road or highway, or renaming of an existing road or highway, shall not have a similar sounding name, when pronounced phonetically, to any other road, highway, or street name in the county; e.g., Baier Road and Bear Road.
 - f. The county or the town may deny a proposed road or highway name if it is deemed inappropriate or offensive to the general public.
- (4) Private roads. When consistent with the public interest in providing government and emergency services and on application of the owner, the town may name private roads following the same process that is used in naming public roads and highways. Owner(s) of the lands on which any such private road is located must agree, by written instrument, to maintain approved signs displaying the road name(s) assigned by the department. All road surface maintenance, upkeep, and liability associated with a named private drive shall remain with the respective property owners. Owner(s), heirs, successors and assigns, shall not thereafter change of any such road without the consent of the department.

31.07 ROAD AND HIGHWAY SIGNAGE

- (1) Road/highway signs shall be placed at the intersection of all roads and highways, showing the names of the roads and highways in accordance with the official road and highway naming map and Master Street Address Guide (MSAG). Town road/highway signs are the responsibility of the town in which the road or highway is located. County highway signs shall be the responsibility of the Pepin County Highway Department pursuant to Wis. Stat. ch. 83. Road/highway signs within private, commercial, business, industrial, apartment, and condominium complexes shall be the sole responsibility of the property owner.
- (2) The type of lettering, composition, material, color, mounting post, and accessories shall be in accordance with the standards established by federal, state, or local law, as applicable.

31.08 ADMINISTRATION

- (1) The department shall create and make available an address application form to be completed by property owners, towns, or other applicants requiring an address number under this ordinance.

- (2) Every applicant shall also provide all additional information that may be required by the department to assign the address number to the correct location. Examples of supporting information that may be requested include aerial photo or map showing proposed location of driveway, driveway permits, and/or measurements to nearest intersection or neighbors.
- (3) The address application provided under (1) shall also include requests for replacement or duplicate signs provided that the applicant provides all of the information required by the department under (2).
- (4) Completed address applications shall be returned to the department with the appropriate fee. Department staff will review the address application and determine whether the address application is complete. If the address application is complete, the department shall assign an address number that conforms to the standards set forth in this ordinance. If the address application is not complete, the department shall notify the applicant and identify the reason for its determination.
- (5) The department shall notify the property owner, Pepin County Sheriff's Office, all emergency response agencies assigned to the official address number, the town clerk, the county treasurer, and the post office of the new official address number.
- (6) The address application and records supporting the new official address number will be maintained by the department.

31.09 FEES

There shall be fees established by County Board Resolution for the following:

- (1) The assignment of a new official address number, which will include the cost of procurement of the required sign.
- (2) The procurement of a replacement address sign or additional address signs.

It is the responsibility of the property owner to pay all fees. In the case where a town requests a replacement sign, the town may choose to pay the fee and seek reimbursement from the affected property owner. In the case where a property owner refuses to pay for the required sign, the county shall request payment from the affected town so that the cost may be assigned by the town to the affected property's tax roll.

31.10 ENFORCEMENT

- (1) Written Order – department staff shall have the power to issue a written order to correct any violation of this ordinance. The written order shall specify the following:
 - a. The nature of the violation and the steps needed to correct it.
 - b. The time period in which the violation must be corrected.

- c. The penalty or penalties the violator will be subject to if the violation is not corrected in the given time period.
- (2) Non-compliance with Order – If the property owner does not comply with a written order from the department, the property owner shall be subject to one or more of the following actions and/or penalties.:
 - a. The issuance of a citation for a violation of this ordinance. Any citation issued under this ordinance may be issued by the department or by the Pepin County Sheriff’s Department.
 - b. Commencement of legal action seeking a court-imposed forfeiture for a violation of this ordinance.
- (3) Penalties – Any person who fails to comply with, or violates, any provision of this ordinance shall, upon conviction of such violation, forfeit not less than \$50.00 or more than \$250.00 plus the costs of the prosecution for each violation. Said person shall be responsible for all damages including address sign and/or post replacement. Each day that a property owner does not comply with a written order of the department shall constitute a separate violation.

31.11 DEFINITIONS

- (1) *ADDRESS APPLICATION* – the address application form prescribed under Section 31.08 of this ordinance.
- (2) *ADDRESS NUMBER* – A number assigned by Pepin County that is posted directly on or near an addressable structure or addressable parcel and is used to identify the addressable structure or addressable parcel for the purposes set forth in this ordinance.
- (3) *ADDRESS SIGN* – Commonly referred to as a fire or emergency number sign identifying and displaying an official address number, and placed and maintained pursuant to Sections 31.04 and 31.05 of this ordinance.
- (4) *ADDRESSABLE STRUCTURE* – Any structure including, but not limited to, a single dwelling home, duplex, mobile home, manufactured home, cabin, apartment building, government building, business, farm building, storage building, warehouse, utility building, church, or school. A structure shall be assigned an address number regardless of whether it is used as a primary or secondary residence.
- (5) *ADDRESSABLE PARCEL* – Any parcel which satisfies any of the following:
 - (a) a parcel containing a secondary or non-occupiable structure where limited activity may take place but the need for emergency response access may be required. Such places include, but are not limited to, a cemetery, quarry, campground, and tower site;
 - (b) any parcel not containing a structure, but with ongoing business operation or similar activities; or

- (c) any parcel that contains a driveway access point or otherwise requires emergency response access as determined by the department.
- (6) *DEPARTMENT* – The Pepin County Land Conservation & Planning Department.
- (7) *EXISTING NONCONFORMING ADDRESS NUMBER* – An official address number existing at the time of adoption of this ordinance that does not comply with all of the provisions and requirements of this ordinance, but that is permitted to remain the official address number for a property by the department pursuant to Section 31.04(14).
- (7) *MASTER STREET ADDRESS GUIDE (MSAG)* – A perpetual database defining the geographic area of a 911 service by an alphabetical list of the street names and also includes the low and high ranges of the address numbers on each street, community names, emergency service number (ESN), and Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) identification codes.
- (8) *OFFICIAL ADDRESS NUMBER* – The address number assigned by the department to each addressable structure or addressable parcel.
- (9) *PERSON* - includes an individual, association, corporation, partnership, limited liability company, joint venture or a government or an agency or a political subdivision thereof.
- (10) *PRIVATE ROAD* – Any road on private property leading to three or more driveways and/or principal structures.
- (11) *ROAD/HIGHWAY SIGN* – A sign posted at a road and/or highway intersection that identifies the road and/or highway name(s).