

# RESOLUTION

## ROCK COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Board of Health Committee  
INITIATED BY



Rick C. Wietersen  
DRAFTED BY

Board of Health Committee  
SUBMITTED BY

October 8, 2018  
DATE DRAFTED

**RECOMMENDING MODIFICATIONS OF WISCONSIN ADMINISTRATIVE RULE NR 210 TO IMPROVE SURFACE WATER QUALITY AND ADDRESS PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS WHEN SEWAGE IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE DISINFECTED SEASONALLY**

- 1 WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) allows through administrative  
2 rule NR 210.06 that sewage treatment plants in Wisconsin do not have to disinfect sewage wastewater  
3 from October 1 through April 30<sup>th</sup> each year unless dates are modified by in an individual site  
4 Wastewater Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permit; and  
5  
6 WHEREAS, sewage discharged without disinfection can have E. coli levels of around 10,000 colony  
7 forming units per 100 milliliters of water which poses a significantly greater public health risk than the  
8 maximum 126 units of E. Coli proposed in the NR 210 rule revisions during periods of required  
9 disinfection; and  
10  
11 WHEREAS, E. coli is a serious public health concern and efforts to minimize E. coli and other  
12 communicable diseases from surface waters used for recreational purposes is a significant step toward  
13 improving public health; and  
14  
15 WHEREAS, the Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District discharges about 40 million gallons of  
16 effluent each day into the Badfish Creek which account for over 50% of the total flow in this water  
17 body and this discharge eventually ends up downstream in the Yahara River and the Rock River; and  
18  
19 WHEREAS, winter base flow water testing by the Rock County Public Health Department over  
20 several years has consistently indicated high levels of E. coli in the Badfish Creek and Yahara River  
21 during periods of non-disinfection of wastewater; and  
22  
23 WHEREAS, the Badfish Creek and Yahara River are popular recreational water bodies that receive  
24 significant recreational use that result in potential human exposure to impacted waters during the  
25 periods of non-disinfection of sewage wastewater; and  
26  
27 WHEREAS, the ultraviolet (UV) disinfection technology utilized by many wastewater treatment  
28 plants could be utilized for extended periods of time, or year-round, to significantly improve the  
29 water quality of the Badfish Creek and Yahara River and reduce potential adverse public health  
30 impacts; and  
31  
32 WHEREAS, the Rock County Public Health Department and Madison Metropolitan Sewerage  
33 District are cooperating to share data and are mutually interested in improving water quality  
34 discharged to Rock County.  
35  
36 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Rock County Board of Supervisors duly  
37 assembled this 25<sup>th</sup> day of October, 2018, in accordance with Wisconsin State Statute 32.05,  
38 does hereby approve forwarding recommendations to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to  
39 make modifications to NR 210 to address potential public health impacts that occur when recreational  
40 waters are receiving non-disinfected sewage wastewater, with specific concerns being the Badfish Creek  
41 and Yahara River which receive a high ratio of wastewater to normal base flows.

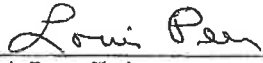
18-10B-113

RECOMMENDING MODIFICATIONS OF WISCONSIN ADMINISTRATIVE RULE NR 210  
TO IMPROVE SURFACE WATER QUALITY AND ADDRESS PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS  
WHEN SEWAGE IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE DISINFECTED SEASONALLY.


Page 2

Respectfully submitted,

BOARD OF HEALTH

  
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Louis Peer, Chair

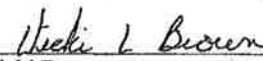
  
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Dr. Connie Winter, DDS, Vice-Chair

  
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Vijaya Somaraju, MD, MPH

  
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Dr. Kaitlyn Meyers, DVM, MPH, FACP

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Judith Wade, WHNP

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Eric Gresens, R.Ph

  
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Vicki Brown

  
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Danette Rynes

  
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Craig Gramke


ADMINISTRATIVE NOTE:

Recommended.

  
Josh Smith  
County Administrator

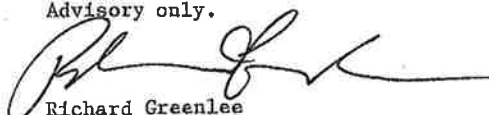
FISCAL NOTE:

This resolution is advisory only and has no direct fiscal impact on Rock County operations in and by itself.

  
Sherry Oja  
Finance Director

LEGAL NOTE:

Advisory only.

  
Richard Greenlee  
Corporation Counsel

RECOMMENDING MODIFICATIONS OF WISCONSIN ADMINISTRATIVE RULE NR 210  
TO IMPROVE SURFACE WATER QUALITY AND ADDRESS PUBLIC HEALTH CONCERNS  
WHEN SEWAGE IS NOT REQUIRED TO BE DISINFECTED SEASONALLY.

Page 3

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY -

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) Wastewater Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (WPDES) permits do not require that sewage wastewater be disinfected from the months of October through April each year. When recreational waters such as the Badfish Creek and Yahara River receive non-disinfected wastewater in large volumes compared to the normal stream flow, water quality impacts from E. coli bacteria and other communicable diseases are likely. The Badfish Creek receives over 40 million gallons of sewage wastewater each day which is more than the normal base-flow of that stream. The Rock County Public Health Department has confirmed through routine testing over several years that E. coli levels in the Badfish Creek and Yahara River are significantly elevated in these periods of non-disinfection of sewage, resulting in potential health impacts for recreational users of these waters.

The Badfish Creek and Yahara River have become increasingly popular for recreational activities such as canoeing, kayaking, fishing, and hunting. The level of these activities has grown annually and do occur throughout the year, not just in May through September.

The ultraviolet disinfection technology utilized by many wastewater treatment facilities could be utilized for longer periods of time, or even year-round, resulting in a significant reduction in potential exposure of recreational water users to communicable diseases, including E. coli.

The Rock County Public Health Department and Madison Metropolitan Sewerage District are cooperating to share data regarding this issue with mutual interests of improving water quality.

This resolution recommends that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources take into consideration the adverse impacts that not disinfecting sewage discharge has on the water quality of the Badfish Creek and the Yahara River and that they take steps to reduce this impact to acceptable public health standards by extending the period in which sewage is required to be disinfected.