

Information Guide



Buying A Home or Vacant Land?



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This information is intended to provide you answers to some questions and who to contact with any others. It is by no means a complete list of everything you need to know when buying property in Monroe County.

Steps to Take Before Purchasing a Home or Vacant Land

(These are some steps to follow and some commonly asked questions about purchasing property in Monroe County.)

1. Check the Deed for the property you are thinking of purchasing to see if there are any easements. Have a title search done to see if there are any liens on the property or if any rights have been sold off. (Such as mineral rights, development rights, etc.) If you are purchasing through a lending agency they will usually require a title search. Check to make sure there are no old waste disposal sites or buried fuel tanks on the property. Also check to see if the property is within 1200 -ft. of a known landfill site.

2. Check with the Monroe County Land Conservation Dept. to see if all or part of the property you are looking at is enrolled in a conservation program such as: Farmland Preservation, Non-point Watershed Project, Managed Forest Lands, Easements, etc. Land in these programs has certain restrictions on use and development.

Check with the **County Zoning Dept.** and ask the following questions:

1. Is the property in a Zoned Township? What Zoning District is it in? What does that mean to me? See Town Clerk for local codes and/or ordinances.

2. Does the property meet all size and lot dimension regulations that may apply? Also check to see if your intended use is allowed under the current Zoning District the property is in.

3. Does the Floodplain or Shoreland Zoning apply to the property? (These regulations are County-wide. They apply even if the property is in a Township that is not zoned.)

4. Are there any Wetland areas on the property?

5. Ask about any setbacks that may apply if you are thinking of putting up a building or

adding on to an existing one in the future. (There are different building setbacks depending on which Zoning District the property is in.)

If the home or property is in a **Subdivision** check with the subdivider to see if there are additional restrictions. (Such as covenants)

"Are there any Wetland areas on the property?"



"Home Inspection"

If you are looking at purchasing a HOME

Have an inspection of the **well and septic system** done by a properly credentialed person. This inspection will determine if the well and septic are in proper working order. This is a good idea to do **before** you purchase the property. If you



"Home Inspection"

are purchasing the property through a lending agency they will most likely require this before granting the loan. Have the house and other buildings inspected by a properly

credentialed person. Again this is something most lending agencies require.

If You Are Looking at Purchasing VACANT LAND

Have an official Soil and Site Evaluation (Perc Test) done on the property. This test will determine what type of septic system is suitable for the soil on the property. This is a good idea to do **before** you purchase the property to make sure it is buildable. (*Monroe County does not allow holding tanks for new construction.*) A list of State Certified Soil Testers is available at the Sanitation and Zoning Office, or on the County Website at www.co.monroe.wi.us.

Steps to BUILD after you have purchased the VACANT LAND

Have your septic system designed. This can be done by a State Certified Septic System Designer, Master Plumber or a Master Plumber Restricted Service. Most plumbers do their own designs or they have a designer they like to work with, so it might be best to

choose a plumber before you have your system designed.

Apply for a Sanitary Permit. This permit must be signed by the plumber who will be

Make sure all permits are posted according to the instructions on the permit.

responsible for installing your septic system. Most plumbers will apply for you, but it is your responsibility to make sure that a permit is obtained **before** installation of your

septic system begins.

Apply for a Zoning Permit.

This is a **County** permit. Check to see if your property is in a Zoned Town or if where you are building is in a Zoned region of the County, such as **Shoreland** or **Floodplain**. You will need to obtain this permit **before** construction

begins. *A Sanitary Permit is required before a Zoning Permit may be issued.* If your property is not in a Zoned Town or a Zoned region of the County then a Zoning Permit is not needed.



Apply for a Building Permit. This is a **Town** permit. Contact your Town Clerk to obtain contact information for that Town's Building Inspector.

Make sure all permits are posted according to the instructions on the permit. Permits must be displayed at all times during construction or installation. **THIS INCLUDES MOBILE HOMES!**

Starting or Relocating a Small Business in Monroe County

Check with the **County Zoning Dept.** and ask the following questions:

1. Is the property in a Zoned Town? What Zoning District is it in? What does that mean to me? See Town Clerk for local codes and/or ordinances.
2. Will a change of zoning be needed? Depending on the type of business a change of zoning may be required.

3. What type of permits will be needed? A Conditional Use Permit may be needed. These permits have application deadlines and can take up to 3 months to process. Check with the Zoning Dept. for details.



Putting up another Building, Questions to consider asking:

I am thinking of putting up another building. Do I need a permit? What else do I need to consider?

There are several things to consider when putting up another building. The first thing you will want to do is contact the Sanitation and Zoning Office. Ask the following questions

1. Is the property located in a zoned township?
2. Does the floodplain or shoreland zoning apply to the property?
3. Are there any wetland areas on the property?
4. Ask about any setbacks that may apply. (There are different building setbacks depending on which Zoning District the property is in.)

Depending upon the answer to the above questions you may or may not need a permit. A county permit is required if the property is located in a **zoned township**. A county permit is required in the proposed building site is located within **shoreland and floodplain** areas. If the proposed building site is located in a **wetland** area a permit from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is required as well as a county permit. Some Towns also require a building permit. Check with the town

clerk to see if a permit is required from the town.

If you are adding onto or altering a house you might have to reevaluate the size of your current septic system.

Additions or alterations may affect the size of the septic system. Check with the Sanitation and Zoning office for more information.

How do I know if my property or potential building site is in the Shoreland Zoning?

Shoreland zoning is **county-wide** and includes even unzoned Towns.

Shoreland is defined as: Land within the following distances from the ordinary high-water mark of navigable waters: **1000-ft.** from a lake, pond or flowage; and **300-ft.** from a river or stream or to the landward side of a floodplain, whichever distance is greater.

A navigable stream is defined by the Wisconsin DNR as: A waterway that has a bed and banks and it is possible to float in a canoe or other small craft at some time of the year — even if only during spring floods.

If your property or potential building site is located within this region contact the Sanitation and Zoning Office to find out building setbacks and what permits are required.

How do I know if my property or potential building

site is located in a floodplain?

Floodplain maps and information may be obtained from the Sanitation and Zoning Office. An official Floodplain Survey may be required to determine floodplain boundaries in some instances. Check with the Sanitation and Zoning office for special requirements and permits required when building in a floodplain.

How do I know if my property or potential building site is located in a Wetland?

Wetland maps and information may be obtained from the Sanitation and Zoning Office. Permits from the Wisconsin DNR are required when doing anything in a wetland. *It is best to check and see if a permit can be obtained for your intended use before purchasing any wetland property.*

It is best to check and see if a permit can be obtained for your intended use before purchasing any wetland property..

What should I consider when choosing a site for my house?

These are just some of the things that you might take into consideration when choosing the exact location of your house; Towns may have additional ordinances or recommendations for siting a house and/or driveway.

1. **VEIW.** Stand in your chosen building site and look around. Think about what room you and your family will spend most of their time in. What do you want to see out the windows of that room?

2. **SUN.** What rooms in your house do you want



“Flooded Home -- Don’t let this happen to you”

exposed the most? The least? What times of day do you want or not want the sun in those rooms?

3. **EROSION.** Will your chosen building site cause erosion of the soil while the house is being constructed? How will you deal with this?

4. **SURFACE & SUBSURFACE WATER MOVEMENT.** Think about how the water will run across and through your building site. Is your proposed

building site in a drainage way? Will putting the house where you want it cause a blockage of water runoff during rainstorms? How can you prevent or change this? Will you have any seepage or water table problems?

5. **ACCESS.** Will you have easy access to your chosen building site? Will emergency and other service vehicles be able to get to your house easily? Think about all seasons and weather conditions. Check with your township to find out who is responsible for snow removal on your road.

6. **DRIVEWAY LOCATION.** Some roads have regulations on where a driveway can enter the road. Does the placement of your driveway entrance correlate with your chosen building site? Also think about the length and turning radius of some emergency vehicles when considering curves in your driveway.

7. **ODOR.** Will rural odors be a concern to my location plans? Rural odors for example are from farms with herds of cattle, farmers spreading manure on fields, etc.



8. **Ft McCoy.** Monroe County is home to the military base Fort McCoy. Will the noise from the Fort be a concern to my location plans? See the Ft McCoy website for more

information about the mission there.

Do I need a Driveway Permit?

Yes, most Towns require a driveway permit. This is a permit issued by the Town. Contact your Town Clerk or Chairman to apply. If you are on a County Road you will need a permit from the Monroe County Highway Dept.

Are there any regulations about modular or mobile homes?

Yes, most Towns have regulations on mobile and modular homes. If the Town is zoned the mobile home must be newer than 20 yrs old. Older models may be used if a Conditional Use Permit is obtained. Towns also have other regulations on these types of homes including more restrictive age requirements. Check with the Town Clerk or Chairman to find out what regulations apply.

How do I get my well?

There are several well drillers in Monroe County. Check the Yellow Pages for listings. State Permits are required within 1200-ft. of a landfill (closed or current).

How do I get my address?

Applications for new addresses can be obtained from the Sanitation and Zoning Office. If you have had a Soil and Site evaluation (perk test) done on the

property an address application will automatically be sent to you once the Zoning and Sanitation Office has the original copy of the soil and site evaluation. This application is then submitted to the Monroe County Land Information Dept.. The process takes approximately 3-4 weeks to assign an address to a home as long as all the correct information is received.

What do I do with my garbage and recyclables?

How do I get electric hookup?

Contact the local electric provider to make the proper arrangements. The seller or realtor should be able to tell you what company provides service to the property.

How do I get LP or Natural Gas service?

Check with the seller or realtor to see what type of service has been provided in the past and who provided it. If you do not want to continue using the current type of fuel or provider check the Yellow Pages for a listing of companies that provide gas and tanks to Monroe County.



What do I do with my garbage and recyclables?

The Monroe County Solid Waste Department is the

state designated "Responsible Unit" for recycling. In Monroe County all municipalities participate in the County Solid Waste Program. Contact your local Town official or the County Solid Waste Dept. for details relative to your property location.

Do I need a permit to burn?

Yes, a burning permit is required from the Wis. Department of Natural Resources for most types of

burning in certain areas of Monroe County. Check the Wis. DNR website for information on how to obtain a free burning permit and for daily burning restrictions.



Where do I go to Vote?

The Town Chairperson or Clerk should be able to direct you to the location of the polls assigned to your area.

What emergency services zone (fire department, ambulance first responder, etc.) am I located in?

To find out what fire department, law enforcement agency, ambulance service or first responder agency responds to your town contact the Emergency Management Department.

Is it safe to dig or do I need to call someone?

Always call Digger's Hotline at 811 prior to digging.

When I'm done building my home where would I place my mailbox?

To find out where you would place your mailbox you will need to contact your local US Postmaster. If you do not know which post office district you are in, this information can be obtained from the Land Information Department.



Do dogs need to be licensed?

Yes, every dog in Monroe County needs to be licensed. Dog owners must obtain a license for each dog yearly. There are license notices and applications sent out in the tax bill every year in most municipalities. Licenses can also be obtained from various other places. At certain times of the year the Town Treasurer can issue licenses. Licenses can be obtained year round at the Sanitation and Zoning Office, County Dog Shelter located just east of Sparta on Highway 16 or online at: www.doglicenses.us/WI/Monroe/ Written proof of a current rabies vaccination is required for licensing. This paperwork can be obtained from the Veterinarian that gave the shot. Some Towns have a limit on the number of dogs



Questions to Consider...Continued

per household. The Town Clerk or Chairperson should be able to tell you if there is such a rule.

What is the fence law and how does it affect me?

The fence law regulates who is responsible for maintaining a fence that is on a property line between two different owners. To find out if this law may apply to your property and for more information contact the Monroe County Land Information Dept.

Monroe County Office Contact Information

County Website: www.co.monroe.wi.us

Sanitation and Zoning Office
14345 County Highway B, Suite 5
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8736
Fax: 608-366-1809
E-mail: alison.elliott@co.monroe.wi.us

Emergency Management Director
112 S Court Street Room 500
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8711

Monroe County
Solid Waste Management
20448 Junco Road
Norwalk, WI 54648
Phone: 608-269-8783
Fax: 608-269-8783

Real Estate Property Listing
Administrative Center
202 S K Street Room 3
Sparta WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8623
Fax: 608-269-8958
E-mail: brannik.beatse@co.monroe.wi.us

Monroe County Highway Department
803 Washington St.
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8740
Fax: 608-269-8831
E-mail: david.ohnstad@co.monroe.wi.us

Monroe County Land Information Dept.
14345 County Highway B, Suite 5
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8698

Monroe County
County Clerk
Administrative Center
202 S K Street Room 1
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8705
Fax: 608-269-8747

Monroe County
Sheriff Department
Monroe County Justice Center
112 S. Court Street, Room 500
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-2117
Fax: 608-269-8889

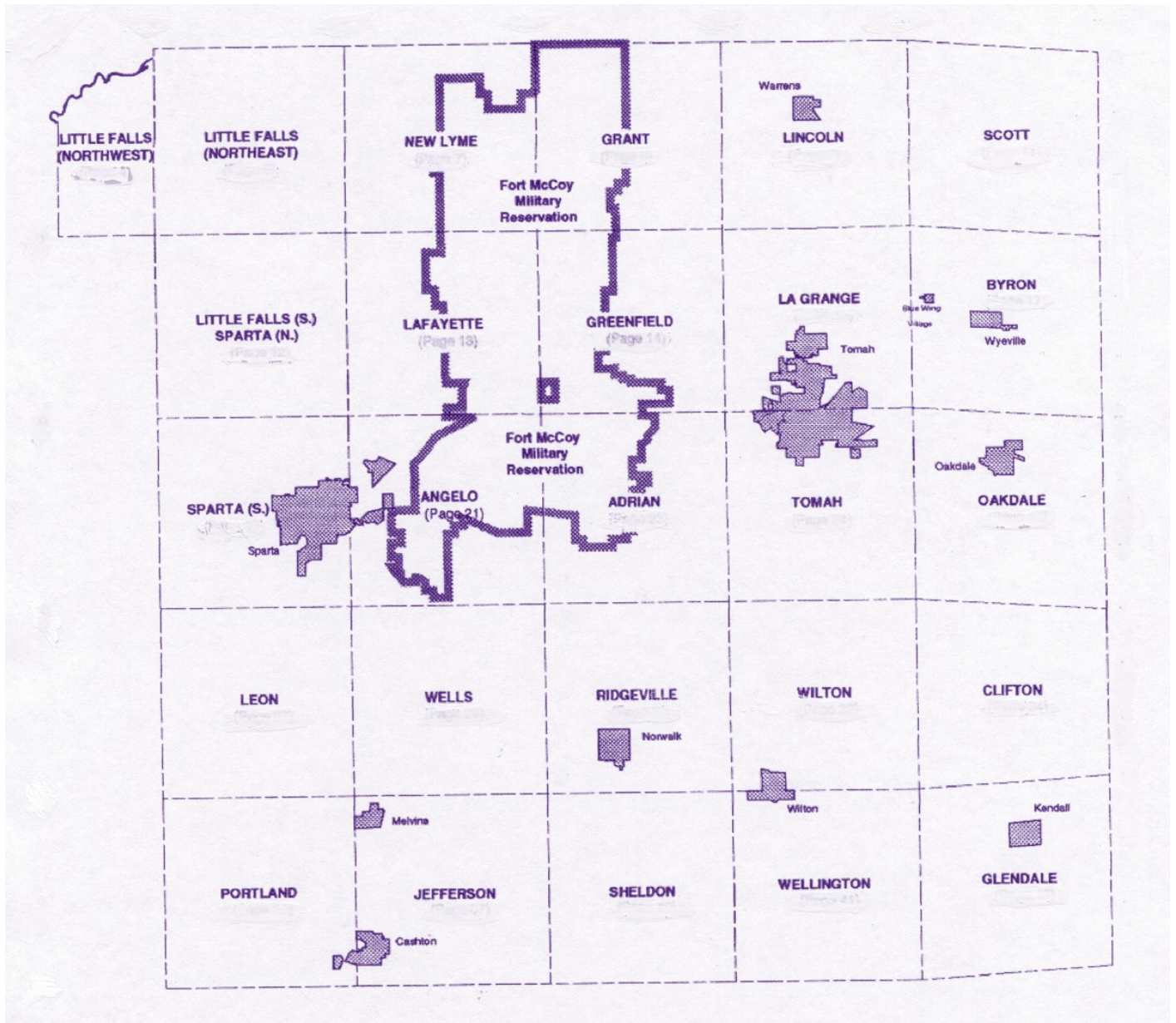
Monroe County
County Treasurer Office
Administrative Center
202 S K Street Room 3
Sparta, WI 54656-2187
Office: 608-269-8710
Fax: 608-269-8958

UW-Extension Office
206 S. K Street
(Entrance in back of building)
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8722
Fax: 608-366-1809

Land Conservation Department
820 Industrial Drive Suite 3
Sparta, WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8974
Fax: 608-269-4394

Register of Deeds
Administrative Center
202 S K Street Room 2
Sparta WI 54656
Phone: 608-269-8716
Fax: 608-269-8715





Monroe County Municipal Towns, Villages and Cities Map

The information contained within is to aid those who are looking to purchase property or a home in Monroe County and was created with the collaboration of various departments and agencies first published on February 12, 2001. Last updated on January 24, 2023.

*We're on the WEB
www.co.monroe.wi.us*



*Monroe County Courthouse
112 S Court Street
Sparta WI 54656*