

Chapter 1

Health and Sanitation

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Sec. 8-1-1 Rules and Regulations.

The Common Council may make reasonable and general rules for the enforcement of the provisions of this Chapter and for the prevention of the creation of health nuisances and the protection of the public health and welfare and may, where appropriate, require the issuance of licenses and permits. All such regulations shall have the same effect as ordinances, and any person violating any of such regulations and any lawful order of the Council shall be subject to the general penalty provided for in this Code.

Sec. 8-1-2 Health Nuisances; Abatement of.

- (a) **Defined.** A health nuisance is any source of filth or cause of sickness.
- (b) **Duty to Abate.** The Common Council shall abate health nuisances pursuant to Sec. 146.14, Wis. Stats., which is adopted by reference and made a part of this Section.

State Law Reference: Section 146.14, Wis. Stats.

Sec. 8-1-3 Animals Excluded from Food Handling Establishments.

No person shall take or permit to remain any dog, cat or other live animal on or upon any premises where food is sold, offered for sale or processed for consumption by the general public.

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Sec. 8-1-4 Deposit of Deleterious Substances Prohibited .

No person shall deposit or cause to be deposited in any public street or on any public ground or on any private property not his own any refuse, garbage, litter, waste material or liquid or any other objectionable material or liquid. When any such material is placed on the person's own private property, it shall be properly enclosed and covered so as to prevent the same from becoming a public nuisance.

Sec. 8-1-5 Destruction of Noxious Weeds.

- (a) The Weed Commissioner shall annually on or before May 15th publish as required by state law a notice that every person is required by law to destroy all noxious weeds on lands in the City which he owns, occupies or controls. A joint notice with other towns or municipalities may be utilized.
- (b) If the owner or occupant shall neglect to destroy any weeds as required by such notice, then the Weed Commissioner of the City shall give five (5) days' written notice by mail to the owner or occupant of any lands upon which the weeds shall be growing to the effect that the said Weed Commissioner after the expiration of the five (5) day period will proceed to destroy or cause to be destroyed all such weeds growing upon said lands and that the cost thereof will be assessed as a tax upon the lands upon which such weeds are located under the provisions of Section 66.96 of the Wisconsin Statutes. In case the owner or occupant shall further neglect to comply within such five (5) day notice, then the Weed Commissioner shall destroy such weeds or cause them to be destroyed in the manner deemed to be the most economical method and the expense thereof, including the cost of billing and other necessary administrative expenses, shall be charged against such lots and be collected as a special tax thereon.
- (c) As provided for in Sec. 66.96(2), Wis. Stats., the City shall require that all noxious weeds shall be destroyed prior to the time in which such plants would mature to the bloom or flower state. The growth of noxious weeds in excess of eight (8) inches in height from the ground surface shall be prohibited within the City corporate limits. Noxious weeds shall include any weed, grass or similar plant growth which, if allowed to pollinate, would cause or produce hay fever in human beings or would cause a skin rash through contact with the skin. Noxious weeds, as defined in this Section and in Section 8-1-7, shall include but not be limited to the following:

Cirsium Arvense (Canada Thistle)

Ambrosia artemisiifolia (Common Ragweed)

Ambrosia trifida (Great Ragweed)

Euphorbia esula (Leafy Spurge)

Convolvulus arvensis (Creeping Jenny) (Field Bind Weed)

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Tragopogon dubius (Goat's Beard)
Rhus radicans (Poison Ivy)
Cirsium vulgaries (Bull Thistle)
Pastinaca sativa (Wild Parsnip)
Arctium minus (Burdock)
Xanthium strumarium (Cocklebur)
Amaranthus retroflexus (Pigweed)
Chenopodium album (Common Lambsquarter)
Rumex Crispus (Curled Dock)
Cannabis sativa (Hemp)
Plantago lanceolata (English Plantain)

Noxious grasses, as defined in this Section and in Section 8-1-7, shall include but not be limited to the following:

Agrostia alba (Redtop)
Dactylis glomerata (Orchard)
Phleum pratensis (Timothy)
Poa pratensis (Kentucky Blue)
Sorghum halepense (Johnson)
Setaria (Foxtail)

State Law Reference: Sec. 66.0407, Wis. Stats.

Sec. 8-1-6 Regulation of Natural Lawns.

- (a) **Natural Lawns Defined.** Natural lawn as used in this Section shall include common species of grass and wild flowers native to North America which are designed and purposely cultivated to exceed eight (8) inches in height from the ground. Specifically excluded in natural lawns are the noxious grasses and weeds identified in Section 8-1-5 of this Chapter. The growth of a natural lawn in excess of eight (8) inches in height from the ground surface shall be prohibited within the City corporate limits unless a Natural Lawn Management Plan is approved and a permit is issued by the City as set forth in this Section. Natural lawns shall not contain litter or debris and shall not harbor undesirable wildlife.
- (b) **Natural Lawn Management Plan Defined.**
- (1) Natural Lawn Management Plan as used in this Section shall mean a written plan relating to the management and maintenance of a lawn which contains a legal description of lawn upon which the planted grass will exceed eight (8) inches in length, a statement of intent and purpose for the lawn, a detailed description of the vegetational types, plants and plant succession involved, and the specific management and maintenance techniques to be employed.

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- (2) Property owners who wish to plant and cultivate a natural lawn must submit their written plan and related information on the form provided by the City. "Property Owner" shall be defined to include the legal title holder and/or the beneficial owner of any such lot according to most current City records. Natural Lawn Management Plans shall only indicate the planting and cultivating of natural lawns on property legally owned by the property owner. Applicants are strictly prohibited from developing a natural lawn on any City-owned property including street rights-of-way. This shall include at a minimum property located between the sidewalk and the street or a strip not less than ten (10) feet adjacent to the street where there is no sidewalk whether the area is under public or private ownership. In addition, natural lawns shall not be permitted within ten (10) feet of the abutting property owner's property unless waived in writing by the abutting property owner on the side so affected. Such waiver is to be affixed to the Lawn Management Plan.
 - (3) Any subsequent property owner who abuts an approved natural lawn may revoke the waiver thereby requiring the owner of the natural lawn to remove the natural lawn that is located in the ten (10) foot section abutting the neighboring property owner. Such revocation shall be put in writing and presented to the City Clerk by the subsequent abutting property owner. Upon receiving the written request to revoke the original waiver, the Common Council shall contact the owner of the approved natural lawn and direct the owner to remove the natural lawn located in the ten (10) foot section abutting the neighboring property owner. The Common Council shall revise the approved Natural Lawn Management Permit accordingly. The owner of the approved natural lawn shall be required to remove the ten (10) foot section abutting the neighboring property owner within twenty (20) days of receipt of the written notification from the City provided the notification is received sometime between May 1 and November 1. Property owners who receive notification from the City between November 1 and April 30 shall be required to remove the ten (10) foot section abutting the neighboring property owner no later than May 20 following receipt of the notification.
- (c) **Application Process.**
- (1) Property owners interested in applying for permission to establish a natural lawn shall obtain and complete an application form available from the City Clerk. The completed application shall include a Natural Lawn Management Plan. Upon submitting a completed application, a Twenty-five Dollar (\$25.00) non-refundable filing fee will be assessed by the City. Upon receiving payment, copies of the completed application shall be mailed by the City to each of the owners of record, as listed in the Office of the City Assessor, who are owners of the property situated wholly or in part within three hundred (300) feet of the boundaries of the properties for which the application is made. If within fifteen (15) calendar days of mailing the copies of the complete application to the neighboring property owners the City receives written objections from fifty-one percent (51 %) or more of the neighboring

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- property owners, the City Clerk shall immediately deny the application. Neighboring property owners shall be defined as all those property owners who are located within three hundred (300) feet of the proposed natural lawn site.
- (2) If the property owner's application is in full compliance with the Natural Lawn Management Plan requirements and less than fifty-one percent (51 %) of the neighboring property owners provide written objections, the City Clerk shall issue permission to install a natural lawn. The permit shall expire one (1) year after issuance and may be reapplied for.
- (d) **Application For Appeal.** The property owner may appeal the Clerk's decision to deny the natural lawn permit request to the Administration Committee at an open meeting. All applications for appeal shall be submitted within fifteen (15) calendar days of the notice of denial of the Natural Lawn Management Plan. The decision rendered by the Administration Committee shall be final and binding.
- (e) **Safety Precautions For Natural Grass Areas.**
- (1) When, in the opinion of the Fire Chief, the presence of a natural lawn may constitute a fire or safety hazard due to weather and/or other conditions, the Fire Chief may order the cutting of natural lawns to a safe condition. As a condition of receiving approval of the natural lawn permit, the property owner shall be required to cut the natural lawn within the three (3) days upon receiving written direction from the Fire Chief.
- (2) Natural lawns shall not be removed through the process of burning unless stated and approved as one of the management and maintenance techniques in the Lawn Management Plan. The Fire Chief shall review all requests to burn natural lawns and shall determine if circumstances are correct and all applicable requirements have been fulfilled to insure public safety. Burning of natural lawns shall be strictly prohibited unless a written permit to burn is issued by the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief shall establish a written list of requirements for considering each request to burn natural lawns, thereby insuring the public safety. In addition, the property owner requesting permission to burn the natural lawn shall produce evidence of property damage and liability insurance identifying the City as a party insured. A minimum amount of acceptable insurance shall be Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000.00).
- (f) **Revocation Of An Approved Natural Lawn Management Plan Permit.** The Mayor, upon the recommendation of the Building Inspector, shall have the authority to revoke an approved Natural Lawn Management Plan Permit if the owner fails to maintain the natural lawn or comply with the provisions set forth in this Section. Notice of intent to revoke an approved Natural Lawn Management Plan Permit shall be appealable to the Administration Committee. All applications for appeal shall be submitted within fifteen (15) calendar days of receipt of the written Notice of Intent to revoke the approved Natural Lawn Management Plan. Failure to file an application for appeal within the fifteen (15) calendar days shall result in the revoking of the Natural Lawn Management Plan Permit. All written applications for appeal filed within the fifteen (15) calendar day requirement shall be

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reviewed by the Administration Committee in an open meeting. The Administration Committee shall make a recommendation to the Common Council. The decision rendered by the Common Council shall be final and binding.

(g) **Public Nuisance Defined - Abatement After Notice.**

- (1) The growth of a natural lawn as defined in this Section shall be considered a public nuisance unless a Natural Lawn Management Plan has been filed and approved and a permit is issued by the City as set forth in this Section. Violators shall be served with a notice of public nuisance by certified mail to the last-known mailing address of the property owner.
- (2) If the person so served with a notice of public nuisance violation does not abate the nuisance within ten (10) days, the Enforcement Officer may proceed to abate such nuisance, keeping an account of the expense of the abatement, and such expense shall be charged to and paid by such property owner. Notice of the bill for abatement of the public nuisance shall be mailed to the owner of the premises and shall be payable within ten (10) calendar days from receipt thereof. Within sixty (60) days after such costs and expenses are incurred and remain unpaid, the City Clerk shall enter those charges onto the tax roll as a special tax as provided by State statute.
- (3) The failure of the City Clerk to record such claim or to mail such notice or the failure of the owner to receive such notice shall not affect the right to place the City expense on the tax rolls for unpaid bills for abating the public nuisance as provided

(h) **Penalty.**

- (1) Any person, firm or corporation which does not abate the nuisance within the required time period or who otherwise violates the provisions of this Section shall be subject to the general penalty found in Section 1-1-7.
- (2) In addition to any penalties herein provided, the City may issue stop work orders upon owners of lots where work is unfinished under a previously issued building permit for any violation of this Section.

Sec. 8-1-7 Regulation of Length of Lawn and Grasses.

- (a) **Purpose.** This Section is adopted due to the unique nature of the problems associated with lawns, grasses and noxious weeds being allowed to grow to excessive length in the City
- (b) **Public Nuisance Declared.** The Common Council finds that lawns, grasses and noxious weeds on lots or parcels of land which exceed eight (8) inches in length adversely affect the public health and safety of the public in that they tend to emit pollen and other discomforting bits of plants, constitute a fire hazard and a safety hazard in that debris can be hidden in the grass, interferes with the public convenience and adversely affects property values of other land within the City. For that reason, any lawn, grass or weed on a lot or other parcel of land which exceeds eight (8) inches in length is hereby declared to be a public nuisance, except for property located in a designated floodplain area and/or wetland area or where the lawn, grass or weed is part of a natural lawn approved pursuant to Section 8-1-6 above.

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- (c) **Nuisances Prohibited.** No person, firm or corporation shall permit any public nuisance as defined in Subsection (b) above to remain on any premises owned or controlled by him within the City.
- (d) **Inspection.** The Weed Commissioner or his designee shall inspect or cause to be inspected all premises and places within the City to determine whether any public nuisance as defined in Subsection (b) above exists. If the Weed Commissioner is denied entry to the premises, he may seek an inspection warrant pursuant to Sec. 66.0119, Wis. Stats.
- (e) **Abatement of Nuisance.**
 - (1) If the Weed Commissioner shall determine with reasonable certainty that any public nuisance as defined in Subsection (b) above exists, he/she shall immediately cause written notice to be personally served, delivered or mailed to the owner. of the property informing said owner that if the nuisance is not abated within five (5) days, the City will have the lot grass, weeds or lawn cut so as to conform with the requirements of this Section.
 - (2) For any second or subsequent notification under Subsection (e)(1) above within a calendar year, the time for notification shall be reduced to twenty-four (24) hours.
 - (3) In the event the nuisance is not abated, the City shall abate or cause to be abated the nuisance and shall charge the expenses of doing so to the owner at a rate as established by the Weed Commissioner. The charges shall be set forth in a statement is not paid in full within thirty (30) days thereafter, the City Clerk shall enter the charges in the tax roll as a special tax against said lot or parcel of land, and the same shall be collected in all respects like other taxes upon real estate, or as provided under Sec. 66.0627, Wis. Stats.
- (f) **Appeal.** If the owner believes that he has not created a nuisance, he may appeal the Weed Commissioner's determination to the Common Council which shall then hold a hearing. Any appeal must be in writing, stating the reasons therefore and be filed with the City Clerk within (5) days of the date of notification from the Weed Commissioner under Subsection (e)(1) or (2) herein. Upon appeal, the owner shall deposit the sum of Twenty-five Dollars (\$25.00) as a bond. If a decision is rendered in the owner's favor, the bond shall be refunded to the owner and no charge for abatement shall be levied against him. In the event the owner fails to appear at the hearing or if a decision is rendered against him, the bond shall be forfeited and shall be applied to any cost incurred by the City for abatement of the nuisance.

Sec. 8-1-8 Rodent Control.

- (a) All buildings, places and premises shall be so constructed and maintained as to prevent rats from being harbored underneath the same or within the walls thereof; and all food products or other products, goods, wares and merchandise likely to attract or become infested with

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or infected by rats, whether kept for sale or for any purpose, shall be so protected as to prevent rats from gaining access thereto or coming in contact therewith.

- (b) All buildings, places and premises shall continuously be kept by the owner, person in charge or the occupant thereof in a clean and sanitary condition and free from rats.
- (c) All buildings, structures or premises that are infected with rats are hereby declared to be public nuisances.
- (d) Whenever rat holes, burrows or other evidence of rat infestation are found on any premises or in any building, it shall be the duty of the owner or occupant to exterminate the rats or to cause the rats to be exterminated.
- (e) No person shall permit buildings or ground to accumulate food, waste, debris or any material which would serve to attract or serve as a harboring place for rats.

Sec. 8-1-9 Smoking Prohibited in Designated Municipal Buildings.

- (a) **Definition.** As used in this Section, "smoke" or "smoking" means carrying a lighted cigar, cigarette, pipe or any other lighted smoking equipment.
- (b) **Where Prohibited.** No person shall smoke:
 - (1) in any enclosed, indoor area of any City owned buildings, motorized machinery or vehicles, excluding park shelters and/or pavilions or at special events and
 - (2) on or in any part of the City of Onalaska Library Campus.