

## Public Works

### Wisconsin Municipal Records Schedule

This section covers record series that are generally grouped under Public Works Records. The schedule identifies records created by most municipalities and is applicable to all records regardless of format or media.

Municipalities must adopt this schedule or have an ordinance in place before it can be used to manage their records. Please read the Introduction section of the WMRS before applying ANY section of the schedule to your records.

To simplify the recordkeeping process for municipalities, the Wisconsin Historical Society has included a field identifying if notification is required before record series may be destroyed.

- Records identified as Waived means that the Wisconsin Historical Society has determined the record series to have low historical value and waived the notification period as indicated Wis. Stat. § 19.21(4)(a). Municipalities are free to destroy any waived records once they reach their required retention period.
- Records designated Notify require you send written notification to the WHS before destruction. Details about the notification process are available on the [Wisconsin Historical Society website](#).

**Note:** Notification should be given on any records 75 years or older regardless if they are marked waived.

### Requirements Specific to Public Works

Records in the Public Works section are arranged under the following subsections:

- Building Inspection
- Engineering
- Maintenance and Operations
- Planning and Zoning
- Utilities

The Public Works section is intended to provide municipalities with schedules for the most common record series generally grouped under this topic. Municipalities that are in need of schedules for records not covered in this section are encouraged to review and consult the appropriate General Records Schedules listed below:

- [Facilities Management and Related Records](#)

Wis. Stat. § 19.21(4)(b) defines the minimum retention cities, villages, and towns may set for water stubs, receipts of current billing, and customer’s ledgers of any municipal utility as 2 years. In addition, municipalities should check the schedule set by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC) for Municipal Utilities. A complete list of records and schedules is located in [“Investigation to Consider Proposed Changes to Records Retention Requirements for Electric, Gas and Water Utilities.”](#)

Schedules specific to Police/First Responder records are not included in the WMRS. Consult the County General Schedule for records schedules for similar records which can be used as a basis for the creation of schedules and/or ordinances.

Surveillance recording schedule applies to municipally operated security footage for public buildings, street cameras, and public transportation. The schedule **does not apply** to footage recorded by police body cameras, patrol dashboard cameras, or any similar police recording device.

Municipalities should have adequate and clear procedures in place that explain the proper handling and destruction of surveillance recordings. Clear communication with appropriate municipal personnel will help to ensure that the record is not destroyed prematurely and public requests and/or any legal or program needs are met in a timely manner.

Record Series Title	Series Description	Retention and Disposition	Confidential	WHS Notification
<b>Building Inspections</b>				
Building Inspection Records	Summary of inspection history of a particular property. Records include original building permit, site plans, certificate of occupancy, conditional use documents, comprehensive design reviews, and violations for both residential and commercial structures. Also includes inspection of plumbing, electrical, ventilation, heating, and air conditioning.	Event+1 year; Event=Life of building	No	Waived

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Building Plan Review and Inspection	Conditionally approved building plans, calculations, and correspondence. Authority provided by Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 361.60(5)(f)1.b.  Note: applies to certified municipalities only (see Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 361.60(2)). <sup>1</sup>	Event+4 years; Event=Construction completed	No	Waived
Building Plans: Residential 1 and 2 Family Dwellings	Includes architectural, design specs, structural and utility plans submitted for inspection review. Authority provided by Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 320.10(6)(a)2.	Event+4 years; Event=Construction completed	No	Waived
Building Inspection: Residential 1 and 2 Family Dwellings	Applications forms, correction orders, correspondence and inspection records. Authority provided by Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 320.10(6)(a)3.	Event+ 7 years; Event=Construction completed	No	Waived
Code Compliance Inspection Reports	Reports completed during field investigations to determine if buildings and system installations comply with the specifications of appropriate codes.	Permanent	No	N/A

<sup>1</sup> Note: Refer to Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 361.60(5) for detailed information on the specific types of buildings that first class, second class, and other municipalities are authorized by the Department of Safety and Professional Services to review. Prior to applying this schedule, the Municipality must review and take the steps outlined in Wis. Admin. Code § SPS 361.60.

Record Series Title	Series Description	Retention and Disposition	Confidential	WHS Notification
<b>Engineering</b>				
Airport Improvement Petition File	Material submitted to the Department of Transportation when a municipality wants to make an improvement to the airport. Records may include public hearing records, briefs, reports and recommendations, and correspondence.	Event+7; Event=petition submitted to DOT	No	Waived
Airport Master Plan	The Airport Master Plan provides information about the condition of the airport and projects development for the next 20 years.	Event+20 years; Event=new plan issued	No	Notify
Construction Plans: Final As-Built Projects	Final as-built plans and original drawings for public for buildings, streets, sewers, sidewalks, etc.	Event; Event=life of structure	No	Waived
Construction Plans: Final As-Built Projects (Historically Significant)	Use for historically significant projects.	Event; Event=life of structure	No	Notify

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Environmental Assessment & Impact Statements	Official copies of environmental assessments, impact statements and related documentation related to municipal construction projects. <sup>2</sup>	Event+6 years; Event=Termination of municipal ownership of the land	No	Notify
Maps: Construction and Topographical	May include maps covering environmental impact/changes, development of specific areas, and the impact on public infrastructure (utilities, roads, sidewalks).	Permanent	No	N/A
Project Records	All documents pertaining to a project including, design and construction contracts, proposed and approved amendments to all contracts, bidding plans and specifications, details on materials used on each project, and all other related project materials. Use for buildings, streets, sewers, sidewalks, etc.	Event+10 years; Event=Date project is completed	No	Waived
Project Records (Historically Significant)	Use for historically significant projects.	Event; Event=Life of structure	No	Notify
<b>Maintenance and Operations</b>				

<sup>2</sup> May include: environmental assessment reports and drafts, environmental impact statements (draft and final), legal notices, comments from the public, DNR and others, related correspondence and supporting materials.

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
American with Disabilities Act (ADA) Facility Reviews	Records cover ADA inspections, investigations, complaint investigations, facility logs and reports regarding ADA compliance relating to facilities and structures.	Event+6 years; Event=Close of review or audit	No	Waived
Asbestos and Hazardous Material and Environmental Remediation Case File	Project files on asbestos abatement and hazardous materials and environmental remediation projects at state owned buildings. <sup>3</sup>	Event+30 years; Event=Completion of the project	Yes <sup>4</sup>	Waived
Building Maintenance: Equipment Repair and Service Records	Documents the installation, maintenance, service and history of equipment commonly used to maintain facilities.	Event+1 month; Event=Removal and disposal of equipment	No	Waived
Building Lease Files	Files on leased facilities.	Event+7 years; Event=End of lease	No	Waived

<sup>3</sup> OSHA 29CFR 1926.1101 governs asbestos abatement projects. The records include medical surveillance records for certain people who wear protective equipment performing asbestos abatement work.

<sup>4</sup> Patient health care records in this series are confidential per Wis. Stat. § 146.82.

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Maps	Series may document road locations or surfaces, zoning information, parks, flood plains, soils, or parcel boundaries. This record series may also include indexes to maps. <sup>5</sup>	Permanent	No	N/A
Physical Plant Monitoring and Inspection Reports	Records documenting the operation of all facets of facilities: VAC; plumbing, mechanical, electrical, structural as well as special monitoring of building components.	Creation+6 years	No	Waived
Profile and Grade Books	Documentation of landscape and features.	Permanent	No	N/A
State Highway Aids Program Records	Records of state aid pertaining to road maintenance.	Creation+7 years	No	Waived

---

<sup>5</sup> Copies of maps that are retained by local government offices after originals have been sent to other government units for retention may be destroyed 90 days after they have been transferred. An example of this are copies of certified survey maps created by local units and then sent to the county register of deeds office for retention under Wis. Stat. § 236.34(2).

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Street and Sidewalk Operations File	Documentation of the performance of tasks related to street and sidewalk maintenance. This may include solid waste management, street cleaning, repairs, snow removal, and garbage collection.	Creation+7 years	No	Waived
Surveillance Recordings	Monitoring and surveillance recordings for public buildings, street cameras, and public transportation. <sup>6</sup>	Event+120 days <sup>7</sup> Event=Date of recording (Note: Recordings may be subject to longer retention. See footnote for more information.) <sup>8</sup>	No	Waive

<b>Planning and Zoning</b>				
Aerial Photographs	Aerial photographs used for planning and map creation.	Event; Event=Superseded	No	Notify

<sup>6</sup> The schedule does not apply to footage recorded by police body cameras, patrol dashboard cameras, or any similar police recording device.

<sup>7</sup> 120 days is the time within which a claim may be filed against a governmental body as defined in Wis. Stats. § 893.80.

<sup>8</sup> Surveillance recordings that are required for any legal or programming purpose (such as open records requests, claims, case file, or litigation holds) must be retained in accordance with any applicable records schedules and/or have completed their legal or programming requirements.



<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Annexation Records	Incorporation records such as petitions, hearing testimony and exhibits, court orders, notices, resolutions, and related correspondence. <sup>9</sup>	Permanent	No	N/A
Comprehensive Growth and Development Plan	Provides general goals, objectives, policies and implementation recommendations to guide the future growth and development of the city.	Event+14 years; Event=Superseded by new plan	No	Notify
Conditional Use Permits	Applications and related documents for a conditional use permit. Applications include site plan, applicate statement, and evidence evidence/documentation.  This series may also include public hearing notice, reports, public hearing documentation, and decision.	Event+7 years; Event=termination of conditional use permit	No	Waived
Easements	Grants of easement to the municipality.	Permanent	No	N/A

<sup>9</sup> Records cover proposed incorporations of town areas into cities and villages pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.0201 - § 66.0209, and municipal consolidations of towns with cities and villages pursuant to Wis. Stat. § 66.0229.

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Final Plats	A map showing the divisions of a piece of land, this series includes vacation or alterations of plats, annexation plats, and final subdivision plats.	Permanent	No	N/A
Preliminary Plats	Created during the development of subdivisions.	Event; Event=Superseded by final plat	No	Waived
Property Survey Records	Includes field notes, benchmark books, and section corner monument logs.	Permanent	No	N/A
Zoning Appeals, Approved	Material submitted to appeal a zoning decision. May include maps, rezoning application, written local description of the proposed zoning boundaries, and drawings of the boundaries. Also includes public hearing records.	Permanent	No	N/A
Zoning Appeals, Unapproved	Material submitted to appeal a zoning decision. May include maps, rezoning application, written local description of the proposed zoning boundaries, and drawings of the boundaries. Also includes public hearing records.	Event+7 years; Event=Final appeal is closed	No	Notify

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Zoning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting Material	Agendas, minutes, reports, plans, and other material submitted to the Zoning Board, and/or Zoning Board of Appeals.	Permanent	No	N/A
Zoning Ordinance	The text of the zoning ordinance spells out uniform rules that apply to each zoning district including: uses of the land (permitted, conditional and prohibited uses), dimensional standards (lot size, frontage, setbacks, building height, bulk, floor area), and the density of development. Authority provided by Wis. Stat. § 60.61.	Permanent	No	N/A
Zoning, Rezoning Files	May include, but is not limited to, maps, rezoning application, written local description of the proposed zoning boundaries, and drawings of the boundaries. Also includes public hearing records.	Permanent	No	N/A
Zoning Variance Files	Records related to area and use variances. Documentation submitted by landowners to secure a variance to the zoning ordinance.	Permanent	No	N/A
<b>Utilities</b> <sup>10</sup>				

<sup>10</sup> Wis. Stat. § 19.21(4)(b) defines the minimum retention cities, villages, and towns may set for water stubs, receipts of current billing, and customer's ledgers of any municipal utility is 2 years. Local governments should also consult the schedule set by the PSC for Municipal Utilities. A complete list of records and schedules is located in "Investigation to Consider Proposed Changes to Records Retention Requirements for Electric, Gas and Water Utilities."

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Abandoned Mains and Services As-Built	Records may include final designs and location maps. Includes plans of private sewer and water systems.	Permanent	No	N/A
Excavation Plans of Private Utilities	Plans submitted by utilities needing to excavate to develop, expand, or repair utility lines.	Permanent	No	N/A
Inspections	Records documenting the inspection of water and sewer lines.	Permanent	No	N/A
Sewer Inspection Records	Indicates problems such as cracked or broken pipes, improper alignment, or loose lateral connections.	Event; Event=Superseded	No	Waived
Water and Sewer Main Break Records	A record documenting the history of breaks in water and sewer main lines.	Permanent	No	N/A

<b>Record Series Title</b>	<b>Series Description</b>	<b>Retention and Disposition</b>	<b>Confidential</b>	<b>WHS Notification</b>
Water, Storm, and Sanitary Sewer Main Maps	Maps providing the location of water, storm, and sanitary sewer mains. Also provides information about the depth, slope, size and composition of these features.	Permanent	No	N/A