

Town of Washburn

Clark County Wisconsin

July 10, 2021

Subject: **Unused Fences Near Roadways**

The Town of Washburn remains an agricultural Town in a state that prides itself on its dairy industry including dairy farming. Many barbed wire fences were erected to keep dairy cattle where they belong: on the cattle owner's land. Several state statutes describe how fencing needs to be put in place if there are cattle present thus protecting all parties involved. These statutes demand the cattle owner must install a fence to keep livestock on their side of the fence line. The statutes also ask the neighbor to erect a comparable fence on their half of the line fence since this enhances the neighbor's property value. Fences are not required as much today as in the past since most dairy cows stay in buildings close to where they are milked 2-3 times per day. This is one of the reasons that many fences have been removed over the past 10-20 years.

Line fences normally remain in place as a divider to ensure each landowner knows where their land ownership ends, and the neighbors begins. I would normally never ask someone to take down a line fence since many times these fences can be considered the legal dividing line between two parcels of land.

The fences I refer to are ONLY the ones next to a Town Road/Town Right-Away. These fences can and often fall into disrepair, leaning into the Town Right-Away causing issues with grass cutting, tree removal and the possibility of liability for the landowner if unnecessary damage occurs to a vehicle. Please ask yourselves: Is the fence required? Will there be cattle put on the land sometime soon that will require the fence? Is the fence in good repair, straight, and not leaning into the Town Right-Away?

If any of the above questions are answered with a "No", then why not have the fence removed or corrected? If removal is the option, begin the process of removing the post / wire connectors, rolling the barbed wire, and pulling the posts out of the ground. If you physically cannot remove the fence, please ask a family member, or contact the Town Board? I have personally removed fences for my neighbor as a good neighbor gesture. When completed I provided the wire, posts, etc. back to them. It was great to get out in the summer sun and do something productive for another human being!

I hope we can all agree that keeping our Town ditches clean, garbage free, and clear of unused materials will maximize our resale values, help make our community look a little better, and minimize possible liabilities. I do hope you will join me in eliminating all unused fences in the Town of Washburn.

Sincerely,

Tony C Suda

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Town Chair - Town of Washburn
Clark County Wisconsin