

LAND USE ELEMENT

Appendix H - 1

TOWNSHIP OF MINERAL POINT

GOOD NEIGHBOR POLICY

The preservation of agricultural opportunities is a strong component of life in the township. Sometimes, conflicts arise between farm and non-farm neighbors. Farming practices, such as tractor road traffic, manure hauling, weed control and night-time fieldwork must be considered a part of living in the country. This “Good Neighbor” policy will strive to minimize conflicts by increasing understanding between farm and non-farm neighbors.

Good communication can go a long way in understanding other points of view. Introduce yourself to your neighbors. Taking a minute to talk about the upcoming planting or harvesting season is not only an ice-breaker, it’s also part of a neighborly tradition that goes back hundreds of years.

Non-farm residents should:

- understand that farming is a **highly valued component** of life in the township. Farms, farm buildings, croplands, pastures, and the open areas that are an integral part of agricultural operations help create the rural character of the township. Additionally, many farms have stayed in the same family for decades and the preservation of **family farms** and traditions are valuable assets to the township. In most cases, farm operations were in place before rural residential areas. You are choosing to live in an agricultural area, so carefully consider all aspects of rural life before making an investment.
- be **tolerant of farm practices** that may be unfamiliar to you. The hauling and spreading of manure may be unpleasant for a day or two but is an important part of agriculture. For safety, farm equipment must travel more slowly on roadways than your automobile. Be patient when following farm machinery.
- take responsibility for **controlling weeds** on your property. For example, allowing Canadian Thistle to blossom and go to seed can create problems for neighboring landowners.
- understand that “good fences make good neighbors.” It is important to maintain **appropriate fencing** per animal type and coordinate any fence changes with your neighbors. When purchasing real estate, be sure any fencing issues are understood.
- learn more about local farming operations and **support the agricultural community**.

Farmers should

- be sensitive to the fact that new neighbors may not be familiar with agricultural practices. Use **judgment** when burning fields, spraying crops and dealing with downed cattle. Place a call to the fire department for advice and recommendations on proper burning practices.
- maintain **fences** to prevent the escape of livestock.
- understand that careless farm practices can have a serious effect on **groundwater**, streams and drinking water supplies.
- be sure that **farm equipment** that operates on public roadways has proper running lights, slow-moving-vehicle signs and all other safety equipment.
- understand that **farms exceeding 500 animal units** must be reviewed by the proper governmental authorities, including Iowa County regarding conditional use permits.