

CHAPTER FIVE: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

Burt Township provides a variety of services and facilities to residents and visitors. In addition, other services and facilities are provided by other government agencies or businesses.

POTABLE WATER

Residents and businesses in the community of Grand Marais are provided with potable water by Burt Township. Water is supplied by two wells located on the north edge of town near the Community Center. Burt Township employs one part-time person who is responsible for maintenance at the water works. Water is not metered and users are charged a flat rate based on classification.

Residential	\$13/month
Seasonal Residential	\$78.00/year
Commercial	\$18.00/month (minimum)*

*Owners of motels and restaurants pay more than the flat commercial rate because they use more water. The school also pays more than the flat commercial rate.

Since the installation of the original water system around 1900, the system has been upgraded only three times. In 1960, a new pump was installed, and in 1975 new controls were installed. A \$570,000 project in 1978 resulted in development of one new well and rehabilitation of the existing well. As a result of this project, the township incurred a debt of \$255,000 to the Farmer's Home Administration, payable over 40 years, or through 2018.

Some of the water lines date back to 1900. The lines were antiquated and there were many leaks. Plans are under way to implement and construct a new water system in Grand Marais. The nearly five million dollar water system upgrade is funded by a Rural Development grant and loan package. The project involves installing six and eight-inch diameter pipes and the replacement of water valves. By the end of the project, approximately six miles of pipe will have been installed. Fire hydrants will be closer together (which may lower fire insurance costs), water pressure will increase, and each building will have a water meter installed. Upgrades will also be made to the pump house building, new controls for the water tank and there will be a new standby generator. The system upgrades will be completed by approximately spring 2013.

WELLHEAD PROTECTION PROGRAM

Burt Township participates in a Michigan Department of Environmental Planning, Resource management Division, Drinking Water and Environmental Health Section, Well-Head Protection Program (WHPP), which monitors water quality. Outside contractors have been hired to fulfill requirements of the program. The Township also participates in a grant program to partially subsidize the cost. The Township Board recognizes the importance of education and outreach

as part of the WHPP and the Board, staff and members of the WHPP are actively involved in the ongoing education and outreach process. Burt Township has developed a Wellhead Protection Program Education and Participation Plan that includes the following: classroom education in cooperation with the Burt Township School, information fliers, newspaper articles, consumer confidence report, posting of a wellhead delineation map, septic system maintenance fliers for residents, annual community clean-up for household waste and household hazardous waste and continuing education for Board members.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

There are no community sewage treatment facilities within Burt Township. Each individual household is responsible for disposing of their wastewater, either with a septic system, cesspool, or a holding tank, which is pumped out periodically.

Soil types in the Grand Marais area have severe limitations in terms of suitability for private septic systems, primarily due to poor filtering capacity or high water tables. Several businesses in Grand Marais are using the costly "pump and haul" method of sewage disposal, due to septic tank failures.

Although there have been no official reports of contaminated wells in the community of Grand Marais, some residents feel that land needs to be acquired for a sewage treatment plant. The Township has acquired land in a trade with the State of Michigan, located next to the School Forest to build a lagoon for wastewater treatment and storage. The Township is reapplying for a grant/loan package to fund this project.

STORM SEWERS

The only storm sewers in Burt Township were installed along M-77 in Grand Marais by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

Until 1990, Burt Township operated a dump for disposal of solid waste from Township residents. In 1990 the Michigan Department of Natural Resources ordered the dump closed, and the township was forced to find other means of providing solid waste disposal services to local residents.

A transfer station was built and opened in 1990, and a comprehensive recycling program was implemented, but since, has gone into disuse due to high volume and transportation costs. There has been strong interest to reopen a recycling center among local citizens and tourists. The Township Board has resolved to accept the Green Communities Challenge, which will create a recycling center within 3-5 years.

Garbage disposal in the Township is provided by Monache Sanitation Service, which provides weekly curbside pickup. Garbage is accepted only in Monache bags. Collected garbage is hauled to a privately owned transfer station.

UTILITIES

Since 1957, Alger/Delta Electric Co-op has supplied power to the residents of Burt Township. The Co-op buys all of their power from other companies, and their service territory is not contiguous.

Current use of the Alger/Delta Electric Co-op system within the Township is nearing capacity. Future problems may arise as more development takes place in the Township, especially east of town. Expansion of the electric system east to the County line would be advantageous. Three-phase power is available only along M-77, except for an extension to the water plant in Grand Marais.

Telephone service in Burt Township is provided by Hiawatha Telephone Company of Munising, fiber optics extends into the community of Grand Marais. Residents of Grand Marais may hook up to television cable service provided by Cable America service is not available to outlying areas. There is interest in bringing broadband Internet into town to improve future economic viability through high-speed Internet.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Residents may request police protection by calling the Sheriff's Office in Munising, or the State Police post in Newberry or Munising. The State Police patrol state highways, including M-77 in Burt Township.

Burt Township has recently passed ordinances regulating noise and the keeping of dogs within the Township.

AMBULANCE SERVICE, SEARCH AND RESCUE

Township ambulance service is provided by eight to 10 volunteers. Each person is scheduled to be on-call for a specific date and time, and volunteers carry pagers as well. Ambulance attendants are compensated for their services on a per diem basis.

A four wheel drive ambulance is housed in the Township garage located across the street from the marina. The ambulance is in good condition overall. A snowmobile and sled are also maintained for winter search and rescue.

The local Coast Guard Auxiliary, a volunteer group, maintains a rescue boat.

FIRE PROTECTION

Fire hydrants are located throughout the community of Grand Marais. Fire protection is provided by eight to ten volunteers whose services are scheduled and who also wear pagers. Volunteers are compensated on a per diem basis. Response time is good and the volunteers are dedicated.

MARINA

The marina is located on West Bay in Grand Marais and provides docking facilities for six to ten boats. Boaters are also allowed to anchor out in the bay. Toilet facilities are provided on the marina site.

AIRPORT

Burt Township owns and maintains an airport approximately three miles southeast of Grand Marais. Originally built in 1947 as an emergency landing field for Trans-Canada Airways, the airport has a grass landing strip, and is not heavily used.

ROADS AND STREETS

Alger County maintains road maintenance equipment at the county garage in Grand Marais. The road crew consists of five employees including a working foreman. These five persons are responsible for maintaining all state and county roads within the township. Planning Commission members feel that the services are adequate considering the rural nature and remote location of Burt Township. More specific information on road classifications and conditions can be found in Chapter 8, Transportation.

TOWNSHIP BUILDINGS

The Burt Township Community Center was built in the early 1980s, using both Township and state grant monies. The facility is located on Township property near Woodland Park in Grand Marais and is used as a meeting hall by local organizations. Senior meals are served in the center and a community library and librarian are housed there. An ice rink is connected to the main building and there is a ball diamond adjacent to the center. Some members of the community have expressed a desire to remodel, rewire and implement new energy systems for the Community Center.

The Burt Township Office Building is located on Grand Marais Avenue. The Health Center is located next to the Burt Township Office Building. It is rented to Marquette General, dentists and other health care professionals.

A new 7,200 square foot Burt Township Public Services Building was constructed in 2012 for storage and to serve as an Emergency Offices Building.

GOVERNMENT

Grand Marais is an unincorporated community and operates as a general law Township. Board meetings are open to the public under Michigan's Open Meeting Act. Township officials are elected and include the supervisor, treasurer, clerk and two trustees.

MEDICAL SERVICES

In addition to the physician from Marquette who visits Grand Marais biweekly, medical care is available in the communities of Munising, Marquette, Manistique and Newberry. These communities offer a wide range of medical services, and hospitals are located in all four communities.

CHURCHES

There are four churches in Grand Marais: Catholic, Lutheran, Mennonite and Methodist.

CEMETERY

There are two cemeteries in the Grand Marais area. The cemetery located south of town is owned and operated by the Catholic Church, while the Township owns and operates the cemetery to the east of Grand Marais. Burt Township has recently acquired land adjacent to the existing cemetery for expansion purposes, and there is adequate space for present needs. The Township should monitor available space to ensure future needs are met.

RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Burt Township residents have access to numerous recreational facilities, including Township-owned parks in Grand Marais, and the marina and three beach access sites in Grand Marais, also owned by the township. The Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, administered by the U.S. Department of Interior National Park Service, provides facilities in the township ranging from campgrounds and scenic sites to hiking trails, beaches, the Au Sable Lighthouse and Grand Sable Dunes. The Lake Superior State Forest also provides outdoor recreation opportunities. There is strong community sentiment to better connect these recreational facilities to the Township through improved pedestrian pathways.

These recreational facilities are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 7, Recreation.

SCHOOLS

The Burt Township School, located at 112 Colwell in Grand Marais, provides Kindergarten-12th grade education to students from the Township. Enrollment figures are as follows:

	<u>2008-09</u>	<u>2009-10</u>	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2011-2012</u>
Elementary	23	13	11	11
Jr. High & High School	38	28	32	24
Total	61	41	43	35

Enrollment at the school has decreased consistently over the years. This could be due to lack of economic opportunities available in the Township or lack of affordable housing for new families within the area. This trend is not isolated to Burt Township, but rather a problem being faced across the Upper Peninsula.

It is predicted that within 2 years, the school will have to shift into a K-8 school due to low enrollment. Currently, a committee is exploring the idea of opening a private boarding facility and shifting the school to a private institution that grandfather-in (free of charge) the local population's students. The boarding house would cater to international students and foster children and supplement the school with 40-60 new students making it more cost effective to continue operating a school within the region. For further information concerning the

continuation and growth of the Public School facility, see Chapter 10: Goals, Policies and Objectives.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

- A moratorium has been placed on new permits for septic tanks due to numerous failures in certain areas. Failing private septic systems also present a threat to health and safety. These two issues are both being addressed with the new Waste Water Sewage System. The Township is in the process of securing a grant to install this system and property has been obtained east of Grand Marais for a lagoon system and storage.
- Although emergency service equipment (fire, ambulance, etc.) is adequate to meet current needs, there is an ongoing need for funds for repair and replacement of vehicles and equipment.
- A new break wall will be completed by fall of 2012, protecting the harbor and eliminating the issue of sand filling the Bay.