

1. [DNR expands counter service beginning today, January 3](#)

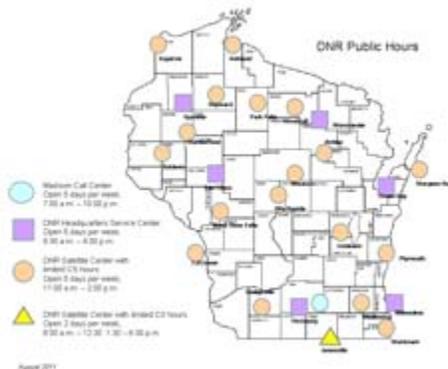
2. [Secretary Stepp reflects on first year at DNR](#)

DNR expands counter service beginning today, January 3

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As many DNR employees return to work today following the holidays, the department begins rolling out expanded over-the-counter service hours at a number of its service centers statewide. When complete later this winter, hours will have increased 40 percent around the state.

“Excellent customer service is a top priority for DNR. Having many of our centers open only two or three days a week made it tough for our customers to know when to come in. These changes assure customers will be able to get help at predictable hours, five days a week,” said Secretary Cathy Stepp.



Locations of DNR customer service centers. Click on map to view larger map. WDNR Image

Beginning today, January 3, 2012, the following service centers are implementing their new counter service hours. Also, starting today, the Poynette and Wautoma DNR offices no longer provide counter service.

All **“full service centers”** will be open Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., remaining open over the lunch hour. As of today, January 3, the Northern Region sub-headquarters in Rhinelander is staffed for full service.

The **“satellite centers”** that now are open, Monday through Friday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., are:

- Antigo
- Black River Falls
- Cumberland
- La Crosse
- Ladysmith

- Madison: GEF2 information center
- Park Falls
- Peshtigo
- Plymouth
- Superior
- Wausau
- Wisconsin Rapids
- Woodruff

"We chose the hours of 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. because our customers told us they wanted us to be available during their lunch hours," said Bureau of Customer and Outreach Services director **Diane Brookbank**. "The new hours offer greater consistency in the hours open to the public and we hope will allow DNR to maintain strong ties with local communities across the state."

When not providing over-the-counter service, customer service representatives are staffing the department's virtual call center, conducting online chats, processing recreational vehicle registrations, responding to email, etc.

The "**limited days center**" in Janesville continues to operate as it has, open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and from 1:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.

More full service and satellite centers are anticipated to open February 6

Depending on staffing levels and training, the plan is to open the following "**full service centers**" at the remaining regional headquarters Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. beginning February 6:

- Eau Claire
- Green Bay
- Fitchburg
- Milwaukee
- Spooner

That same day, DNR expects that the following "**satellite centers**" will be open for business Monday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.:

- Ashland
- Baldwin
- Dodgeville
- Hayward
- Oshkosh
- Sturgeon Bay
- Sturtevant
- Waukesha

Customers can talk with DNR customer service representatives by phone at 1(888)936-7463 every day of the week, from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. Brookbank pointed out that this degree of accessibility is unmatched by any other natural resource agency in the country.

Via a link on [DNR's website "www.dnr.wi.gov,"](http://www.dnr.wi.gov) customers also can participate in live [chats](http://www.dnr.wi.gov/chat/) at "www.dnr.wi.gov/chat/" between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., seven days per week.

DNR further expands services through new registration agents

Brookbank added that with the addition of 250 businesses statewide, the public no longer has to even go to a DNR service center to register boats, ATVs and snowmobiles.

"In addition, we have over 1,300 license agents statewide that are available to sell licenses," she said.

As is the case with many business transactions today, members of the public now can complete applications for hunting and fishing licenses, as well as register recreational vehicles, online. Hunting and fishing licenses that don't require a tag can be printed at home. Click on "[Hunting & Fishing Licenses](#)" on the "www.dnr.wi.gov" homepage. Brookbank referred to DNR's customer service representatives as "highly trained to interpret regulations, resolve license and registration problems, as well as being knowledgeable about resources and recreational opportunities at the local level."

If you have questions about DNR's expanded customer services, email [Diane Brookbank](#), or call her at (608)267-7799.



Secretary Stepp reflects on first year at DNR

By: Cathy Stepp, Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources

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Since becoming secretary of the Department of Natural Resources 12 short months ago, I have been awed by the talent and dedication I have seen here. I have learned much, and I have been privileged to work with my DNR colleagues on many exciting projects.



Cathy Stepp held a bear cub last March while on a field trip with researchers studying how best to manage Wisconsin's black bear population. WDNR Photo

In August, DNR was designated as Wisconsin state government's first and only enterprise agency. Gov. Scott Walker gave us unprecedented authority to implement ideas from our staff on ways to save money, improve processes and better serve the public.

In deer management we suspended earn-a-buck, implemented research projects to

assess the impact of predators on the deer herd, and began work with the state's new deer trustee, James Knoll, better known as Dr. Deer. Deer harvest and working with hunters has taken a turn for the better. There is still work to do.

We took an aggressive stand in pushing for federal delisting of the gray wolf. The gray wolf population now numbers eight times Wisconsin's recovery goal, and it is long past time for our biologists to actively manage problem wolves plaguing many farmers. I am pleased our leadership has led to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's very recent announcement removing the wolf from federal Endangered Species Act protection. Wisconsin's long fought battle to manage growing wolf populations within its borders is nearly over.

We welcomed 13 new participants with 102 facilities into Wisconsin's innovative Green Tier program, which has at its foundation the idea that by working WITH business we can achieve environmental excellence. In addition, we established an Office of Business Support and Sustainability to provide a single point of contact for businesses looking to locate or expand in Wisconsin.

We worked together with state and local partners to eradicate marijuana grows on public lands, respond to the Oak Creek bluff collapse, and cleanup and salvage valuable timber from the massive blowdown in the northwestern part of the state.

We have begun rebuilding a DNR staff hobbled by retirements and long position freezes -- including recruiting a new class of conservation wardens. And we have made customer service -- working with our publics as partners -- as the priority for every one of our staff. In January, we will announce plans to open many of service centers for more customer-friendly hours.

As I travel the state, I am proud of the comments I am hearing that people like "the new DNR" and direction we are taking. DNR's dedicated staff and I look forward to another year of serving Wisconsin's citizens.

Footnote: *This news release was posted on December 22, 2011.*



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