

# NEWS



Land Services Department  
Environmental Services  
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**CROW WING COUNTY**  
BRAINERD, MINNESOTA 56401

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## 50% EXPANSION TO NONCONFORMING STRUCTURES SET TO EXPIRE IN 2012

Crow Wing County is reminding property owners that this year is the time to complete planned expansions to non-conforming structures without the requirement of obtaining a variance. The County's current land use regulations allow a one-time 50% expansion of non-conforming structures – structures that do not meet current zoning requirements, such as setbacks from water or other "grandfathered" zoning requirements. Such structures may be expanded once by up to 50% without the need for a variance, but this allowance will expire on December 31, 2012.

According to Land Services Department Supervisor Chris Pence, "Landowners who have not yet taken advantage of this one-time 50% expansion opportunity to expand the old cabin or other non-conforming structures should be aware that the window is closing. Permits to perform such expansions must be approved by the County in 2012. After that, a variance will be required to expand a non-conforming structure in Crow Wing County."

Current law allows a legally non-conforming structure to be increased one time by up to 50% of the current footprint as long as the expansion does not encroach any closer to the lake or other appropriate setbacks, is not located in shore impact zone 1, and the structure was built prior to land use regulations (1970). However, this provision sunsets at the end of 2012, and thereafter, expansions of nonconforming structures in Crow Wing County will require a variance. Therefore, property owners have until December 31, 2012 to receive an approved permit from the County for these expansions. The approved permit is then valid for two years, during which the construction must be completed.

The Land Services Department is committed to providing excellent customer service while helping landowners make wise choices that protect Crow Wing County's extraordinary natural resources. Citizens are encouraged to contact the Environmental Services Office at (218) 824-1125 or [environmental.services@co.crow-wing.mn.us](mailto:environmental.services@co.crow-wing.mn.us) to discuss expansions of structures or other land use questions before starting building projects. Information about land use in Crow Wing County can be found at [www.co.crow-wing.mn.us](http://www.co.crow-wing.mn.us).

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