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## Residence ID Cards issued to Seasonal Residents

Cards help state's part-time residents distinguish themselves from tourists as they use local services paid for in property taxes.

Personalized identification cards were sent to over 3000 of Wisconsin's seasonal residents from around the country today by the Wisconsin Seasonal Residents Association (WiSRA). in preparation for the recreational season. The cards identify the taxpayer's residence location in order to qualify for local services as a resident. This is the Association's sixth year issuing the cards since Wisconsin DOT will not issue ID cards to non-residents without them surrendering their home-state license.

"There is virtually no way to tell the difference between a weekend camper and a veteran landowner from their license plate or out-of-state license" says Nick Kaufmann, the Association's Executive Director. Members show the card along with their photo ID to establish both personal identification and local Wisconsin residency. "If you're trying to pay with an out-of-state check, renting a video or paying green fee on your counties' golf course, you need something more than your license" says Kaufmann. "It's not guarantee, but it's better than nothing and more convenient than carrying around your last tax bill."

While hundreds of Wisconsin communities are now preparing for the seasonal influx of both tourists and landowners, many of Wisconsin's Seasonal Residents and municipal employees will get caught up in an identity dilemma resulting in fee discrimination. Who's the tourist and who's the property tax payer? The driver's license is the standard document to determine which fee you will pay; resident or nonresident. There seems to be no middle ground.

Under pressure from WiSRA, Kenosha county officially recognized seasonal residents and changed it's definition of "resident" as anyone who could show their Wisconsin driver's license *or* a real estate tax bill and any picture ID. The Association has reversed similar issues in other counties and municipalities, for example: Door County over cemetery sales; Grant county with library access; Iowa County with recycling bags; Madeline Island over park sticker distribution, and so forth.

Property taxpayers have the same constitutional rights for access to services provided by their taxes. That includes local and county services and programs sponsored by most educational

institutions. A few cities like Rhinelander will issue a community card to all property taxpayers for similar reasons but this service is not widespread.

Kaufmann adds “we see a number of communities struggling with the differentiating seasonal residents, and nonresident tourists. The paradigm is slowly changing that there is a third category –Seasonal Residency.” Members are cautioned not to expect too much. The card has no official recognition and members will still not get a cheaper fishing license.

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***The Wisconsin Seasonal Residents Association\* is a not-for-profit corporation representing over 12,000 of the state’s part-time resident community***

\*formerly Wisconsin Out-of-State Land Owners Association (OSLO)

