

Realities of Rural Living in Ogle County, Illinois

Living in the country can be a wonderful way of life--if your expectations are in line with reality. Reality seldom measures up to the romanticized version of almost any idea or ideal--as is most often found by those who move from an urban setting to the country. People often intend to "get away from it all" and enjoy the serenity of an agrarian countryside. What they find, however, is that they are only trading the benefits and drawbacks of city living for those of the country. (Adapted from "The Code of Country Living")

In Ogle County, you will find working farms along with a level of infrastructure and services below that provided through the collective wealth of an urban community. Many other factors, too, make the country living experience very different from what may be found in the city.

Ogle County's predominant land use is agriculture. Crop farming, animal feeding and all other manner of agricultural activities and operations in Ogle County are integral and necessary elements of the continued vitality of the County's economy, culture, landscape and lifestyle. Ogle County specifically recognizes the importance of agricultural operations as necessary and worthy of recognition and protection.

Under the State of Illinois' "Farm Nuisance Suit Act", all normal and non-negligent agricultural operations may not be considered nuisances. Landowners, residents and visitors must be prepared to accept as normal the effects of agriculture and rural living and understand that it is likely to encounter a number of practices that area farmers have been and will likely continue doing in their normal farming practices carried out for agricultural purposes such as the following:

- Wide, slow moving equipment on roads or in fields at various times of the day or night.
- Noise, dust or odors from the operation of machinery, as well as herbicides, pesticides, fertilizers and manure being applied to farmland, including aerial spraying.
- Wind blown debris, such as corn stalks, soybean residue, or other materials.
- Odors, noise and insects from livestock operations and/or stray livestock.
- Drainage problems or short term flooding, which may occur during heavy rainfall.

Also, public services in rural Ogle County may be at a lower level than in an urban area. Changing conditions and lower design level roads may mean slower travel. In extreme weather, travel may not be possible at all due to snowfall, drifting snow, or flooding. Response times of emergency service providers (sheriff, fire fighters, medical care, etc.) will likely be longer than in the city. Under some extreme conditions emergency response will be very slow and possibly expensive. Mail delivery may be hampered by weather conditions and standard parcel and overnight package delivery in the country may vary, at best, from city standards.

Utility services in rural Ogle County may be at a lower level than in an urban area. Typically, homes in rural Ogle County do not have access to public water or sanitary sewer service, which results in private wells and sewage disposal systems being required. Private wells and sewage disposal systems require ongoing maintenance to reduce the risk of water contamination and/or sewage system failure, which could result in costly repairs. Cellular telephones may not work well in all areas of Ogle County. Links to Internet provider services via phone line may require a long-distance phone connection. Power outages can occur with more frequency in rural areas than in urban settings. Children are exposed to different hazards in a rural setting than they are in an urban setting. Farm equipment, ponds, ditches, electrical service, high speed traffic, poisonous plants and animals, livestock, and territorial farm dogs may present a very real threat to the health and safety of children. Therefore, it is imperative that children's activities be properly supervised for both the protection of the children and the protection of the farmers' livelihood.

Land uses, building construction and other activities in rural Ogle County may be affected by numerous laws, ordinances, rules and/or regulations such as zoning, floodplain and health regulations. It is the landowners responsibility to check with the local authorities prior to commencing any use, construction project or activity to insure compliance with the law.

All Ogle County residents and property owners are encouraged to act as responsible environmental stewards, to learn about their rights and responsibilities, and to act as good neighbors and citizens. Further information regarding topics and issues addressed, as well as other issues regarding rural living, may be obtained from the Ogle County Planning & Zoning Department, Ogle County Clerk/Recorder, Ogle County Soil & Water Conservation District, Ogle County Farm Bureau, Ogle County Cooperative Extension Service, and by reading "The Code of Country Living".

I hereby certify that I have received, read and understand the "Realities of Rural Living in Ogle County".

Signature

Signature

Dated this _____ day of _____, _____.