

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why are the 8 to 12 townships and villages considering a lawsuit against Richland County?

The municipalities are taking action to protect their local property taxpayers from an inequitable and legally fraudulent county tax levy. The county is exploiting a narrow emergency medical services (EMS) exemption to bypass standard state tax limits to plug general county budget holes, while failing to provide a uniform or fair "countywide" service.

What does Wisconsin law say about exceeding the levy limit for EMS?

Under **Wis. Stat. § 66.0602(3)(e)6**, a county can exceed standard property tax limits without a voter referendum *only* if the funds strictly support a unified, **countywide emergency medical system**. The coalition argues that a system covering only 46% of the landmass with Advanced care, while leaving 54% to underfunded volunteer units (with reimbursements as low as \$0.00), does not legally qualify as a unified countywide system.

How is the county "cooking the books" on Dispatch and Radio Tower costs?

The county is charging the EMS levy a flat **one-third (33.33%)** of both the **\$1,250,000 Dispatch Center budget** and the **\$250,000 radio tower maintenance agreement**. However, official dispatch logs from August 2025 to July 2026 prove that EMS calls only account for **14.87%** of system usage. Furthermore, the county completely omitted the **Highway Department** from the radio tower cost-sharing calculation. This mathematical manipulation illegally overcharges the EMS levy by **at least \$276,900** to fund general county overhead.

Why is there an "Emergency Care Disparity" in the county?

The county-run ambulance service provides **Advanced EMT (AEMT)** care. Meanwhile, multiple border townships are protected by local units that utilize direct intercept agreements with **Tri-State Ambulance by Emplify stationed in Viroqua**, **Reedsburg Fire and EMS-Middleton EMS** and **AEMS provided by Dodgeville EMS** to provide **Paramedic-level care** or AEMT (Advanced Life Support). Local taxpayers are being forced to pay an inflated county tax for a lower tier of central care, while their actual local paramedic safety net receives little to no financial support from the county pool.

What is the county's plan for the new \$350,000 ambulances?

The county has officially stated in public board meetings that it will completely shut down its ambulance service on **December 31, 2028**. Despite only operating for two more years, they are buying up to 3 ambulances over the next 2 years new rigs for **\$350,000** or executing **\$250,000 remounts** rather than leasing. When the county exits the business in 2029, it appears likely they intend to liquidate these vehicles and sweep the proceeds directly into the county's **General Fund** to patch structural deficits.

What will this lawsuit accomplish?

The lawsuit aims to secure an emergency injunction to freeze the implementation of the 2027 EMS levy and halt the unauthorized purchase of the capital vehicles. Simultaneously, the coalition will file a formal complaint with the **Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR)** to audit the county's levy limit calculations. This will force the county to the negotiating table to build a transparent, legally compliant regional EMS model.