

# Wisconsin Historical Society: Placed the Waite Grass Carpet Company Building on the State Register of Historic Places

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**Contact: Kara O’Keeffe**  
[kara.okeeffe@wisconsinhistory.org](mailto:kara.okeeffe@wisconsinhistory.org)  
[608-261-9596](tel:608-261-9596)

**Oshkosh, Wis.** – The Wisconsin Historical Society placed the Waite Grass Carpet Company building (Oshkosh, Winnebago County) on the State Register of Historic Places.

The Waite Grass Carpet Company building tells the unique story of the wire grass industry in the upper Midwest. The Waite Grass Carpet Company was one of a handful of enterprises in the upper Midwestern states that utilized a regionally abundant-but largely unusable-natural resource, wire grass, to produce and market nationally-distributed consumer goods. Grass carpet manufacturing was an important industry in Oshkosh in the first half of the twentieth century and Waite Grass was one of two of the largest and most successful companies manufacturing these products in the Wisconsin/Minnesota region. Waite Grass was a large employer in Oshkosh, continued to grow and expand production facilities at this location, and was an innovator, willing to adopt new technologies and processes – evidenced in numerous patents for production techniques, and in mention in the trade and advertising literature of the period. It outlasted other regional competitors and its growth and innovation fueled its success as evidenced in the company’s continued growth and expansion of its manufacturing facility. Of the associated industries in Oshkosh that were thriving in the early twentieth century, the Waite

Grass Carpet Company is the best physical reminder of this local industry.

The State Register is Wisconsin's official list of state properties determined to be significant to Wisconsin's heritage. The State Historic Preservation Office at the Wisconsin Historical Society administers both the State Register and National Register in Wisconsin.

To learn more about the State and National Register programs in Wisconsin, visit [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org).

### **About Wisconsin Historical Society**

The Wisconsin Historical Society, founded in 1846, ranks as one of the largest, most active and most diversified state historical societies in the nation. As both a state agency and a private membership organization, its mission is to help people connect to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories. The Wisconsin Historical Society serves millions of people every year through a wide range of sites, programs and services. For more information, visit [www.wisconsinhistory.org](http://www.wisconsinhistory.org).