

# Stronger Wisconsin: WI agency secretaries highlight community efforts toward greater climate resiliency in Milwaukee

Posted on Tuesday, Oct 12, 2021

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**Madison, Wis.** — State agency secretaries continue to highlight community climate resiliency efforts across the state, with a recent focus on Milwaukee. Through this work we can build a Stronger Wisconsin that will be prepared to withstand extreme weather events.

Wisconsin Insurance Commissioner Mark Afable, Department of Safety and Professional Services Secretary Dawn Crim, Department of Financial Institutions Secretary Kathy Blumenfeld, Department of Natural Resources Secretary Preston Cole, and Governor Evers' Milwaukee Outreach Director Nadiyah Groves met with local leaders to learn more about how neighborhood-level flood mitigation projects have helped their communities prepare for and withstand severe weather events.

First, they met with Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District Executive Director Kevin Shafer to learn about floodplain mitigation projects at Pulaski Park and the 34<sup>th</sup> Street corridor. Later they were joined by Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley for a walking eco-tour of the Lindsey Heights Neighborhood to learn about Walnut Way's innovative and successful efforts to build community engagement in sustainability and conservation projects.

“We already knew that communities of color suffer disproportionately in natural disasters for a multitude of reasons,” Crim said. “They are geographically located in areas more prone to flooding, and they often lack access to governmental resources to help them recover. As our weather events continue to grow more severe and more frequent, the inequities these communities and people of Wisconsin face will continue to grow.”

The tours were part of the Stronger Wisconsin campaign to raise awareness of the threats posed by climate change, identify community resiliency efforts that can be successful, and evaluate potential regulatory changes to support them. Commissioner Afable says collaboration across government, industry, and communities is critical.

“The insurance industry is critical to these conversations and efforts, but one group alone cannot achieve what we need to achieve,” Afable said. “We need to work with all stakeholders to develop responses that truly address needs, allocate resources efficiently and equitably, and build the infrastructure and connections that will support strong, healthy, and safe communities.”

Commissioner Afable and Secretaries Crim and Blumenfeld have been leading the Stronger Wisconsin campaign. This was their second visit to learn about community-level approaches to building resilience. In June they visited several homes in Door County to learn about the resiliency benefits of more sustainable home design and construction.

“Severe weather events can devastate individuals and entire communities, and some Wisconsin families, businesses, and neighborhoods never fully recover from a major flood or storm,” Blumenfeld said. “We are eager to continue this collaboration with the financial services, insurance, and construction industries as well as local governments, community groups, and individuals. We encourage everyone to

participate in building more resiliency in every community across the state.”

The Secretaries and Commissioner will continue to elevate the importance of climate resiliency to prepare Wisconsin for the future. Consumers are encouraged to visit [oci.wi.gov/disasters](https://oci.wi.gov/disasters) to learn more.