

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 01000318

Date Listed: 4/6/01

Property Name
Kohler Company Factory Complex

County
Sheboygan

State
WI

Multiple Name

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.



Signature of the Keeper



Date of Action

=====
Amended Items in Nomination:

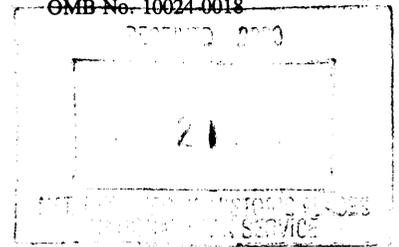
Section 7, p. 5, Resource 5 (Enamel Shop), 1st paragraph, third line from the bottom: the "(see photos 68-70)" reference is meaningless and is hereby deleted.

Photo Page, p. 1: Items a-d are the same for ALL photos, #1-19.

This information was provided by Daina Penkiunas of the WI SHPO staff.

DISTRIBUTION:

- National Register property file
- Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)



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**United States Department of Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Kohler Company Factory Complex

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 444 Highland Drive

N/A not for publication

city or town Kohler

N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Sheboygan

code 117 zip code 53044

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)


Signature of certifying official/Title

February 6, 2001
Date

State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.
(See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Kohler Company Factory Complex
Name of Property

Sheboygan
County and State

Wisconsin

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the
National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the
National Register.

See continuation sheet.

removed from the National
Register.

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(check as many boxes as
as apply)

private

public-local

public-State

public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

building(s)

district

structure

site

object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources
in the count)

contributing

noncontributing

11

0 buildings

sites

4

structures

objects

15

0

total

Name of related multiple property listing:

(Enter "N/A" if property not part of a multiple property
listing.)

None

Number of contributing resources

is previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/manufacturing facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Late 19th and 20th Century Revivals

Late 19th & Early 20th Century American Movements

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation Concrete

walls Brick

Concrete

roof Metal, Asphalt

other Glass

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Kohler Company Factory Complex
Name of Property

Sheboygan
County and State

Wisconsin

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Industry

Period of Significance

1901-1960

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Brust and Philipp
Hilpertshauser, Charles

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Kohler Company Factory Complex
Name of Property

Sheboygan
County and State

Wisconsin

9. Major Bibliographic References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous Documentation on File (National Park Service):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State Agency
 Federal Agency
 Local government
 University
 Other

Name of repository:
Kohler Company

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 89-acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>16</u>	<u>437200</u>	<u>4843160</u>	3	<u>16</u>	<u>437660</u>	<u>4842860</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>16</u>	<u>437200</u>	<u>4842660</u>	4	<u>16</u>	<u>437660</u>	<u>4843280</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

See Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Timothy F. Hegglund/Consultant for the Kohler Company			date	December 4, 2000
organization				telephone	608-251-9450
street & number	1311 Morrison St.			zip code	53703
city or town	Madison	state	Wisconsin		

Kohler Company Factory Complex
Name of Property

Sheboygan
County and State

Wisconsin

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title	Herbert V. Kohler, Jr. / Chairman of the Board Robert Jablonski / Vice-President - Operations Support		
organization	Kohler Company	date	December 4, 2000
street & number	444 Highland Drive	telephone	920-457-4441
city or town	Kohler	state	Wisconsin
		zip code	53044

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Section 7 Page 1 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, WI

Description

The Kohler Company Factory Complex consists of a very large, highly intact and historic, multi-building industrial complex located within the planned community of Kohler, Wisconsin. Founded by John Michael Kohler in the nearby city of Sheboygan in 1873, the Kohler Company today is North America's largest manufacturer of full line plumbing fixtures. It is also a leading manufacturer of electric generators and gasoline engines, as well as of precision controls, furniture, and other products, and it has plants located throughout the world. Both the Company's world headquarters and its largest plumbing fixtures division manufacturing plant are now and have always been located within the Kohler Company Complex in Kohler, which also contains a substantial manufacturing plant that is associated with the gasoline engine division of the Company.

As noted above, the Company had its origins in the city of Sheboygan in 1873 and it remained in that city until 1899, when it moved to its present location in what was then the tiny unincorporated rural community of Riverside, which is situated four miles west of Sheboygan and one-and-one-half miles east of the smaller city of Sheboygan Falls.(1) Most of the buildings associated with the first plant built in this new location were destroyed by fire just two years after they were constructed, and the earliest portions of the existing Complex are believed to date from the rebuilding activity that followed this fire.(2) The known history of the contributing buildings in the Complex spans the years from 1901 to 1960. This history is complicated, however, by the fact that many of the Complex's oldest buildings have now been either partly or wholly subsumed within larger expanded buildings. The earliest buildings in the Complex were, for the most part, freestanding units when first built, and typically had separate functions. Within a short period of time, though, most of these buildings were either expanded as the operations of the Company increased in size or they were replaced by larger ones. The result, in several instances, has been the creation of buildings of enormous size, with several having a total surface area of over 1,000,000 square feet. Never the less, nearly all of the buildings that have been constructed within the boundaries of the Complex since 1901 are still readily recognizable today and most still retain much or all of their historic appearance.

The physical setting of the 89-acre Kohler Company Complex was developed from farmland purchased by the Company for this purpose and it is completely flat. The land associated with the Complex, however, is part of a larger contiguous 191-acre parcel of land belonging to the Company, which parcel is bounded by Lower Falls Road (CTH PP) to the south, Interstate Highway 43 to the east, STH 23 to the North, and Highland Avenue (CTH Y) to the west.(3) The Complex itself occupies the southwest portion of this larger parcel and it is bounded by Lower Falls Road to the south, Highland Avenue to the west, and, to the north and east, by internal service roads. Tracks of the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad run just south of the Complex between it and Lower Falls Road, and the Sheboygan River winds its way eastward towards Sheboygan just south of Lower Falls Road. Also located south of the Complex across Lower Falls Road and west of the Complex across Highland Avenue are residences and other buildings associated with the village of Kohler, which is an independent entity that was begun in 1916 and was developed by the Company over a period of several decades as a model planned community that was intended to house Company employees.(4)

Considerable care has been taken by the Company to ensure that the village of Kohler is not adversely affected by having one of Wisconsin's largest industrial plants as a next door neighbor. The landscape to the north and east of the factory

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Section 7 Page 2 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, WI

Complex proper is still essentially rural, even park-like, while a broad grassed parkway dotted with trees borders the railroad tracks that run along the south boundary of the Complex. The entire Highland Avenue frontage of the Complex, meanwhile, is treated as an urban park and is well landscaped with lawns, shrubbery and mature or maturing trees that are planted both in rows and in groups. Behind this frontage, a metal chain-link fence separates the manufacturing portion of the Complex from the original main office building and its much larger successor, which are the only Complex resources that are located outside the fence. These two buildings are also the only ones in the Complex that can be said to have recognizable architectural styling. The older of the two (Resource 1) is a fine, two-story, Classical Revival style building constructed in 1908, while the present main office building (Resource 2) is a fine, three-story, later Romanesque Revival Style-influenced design that was built in 1925. All the rest of the buildings within the Complex boundaries are good, representative examples of Astylistic Utilitarian Form design that together constitute a virtual anthology of this form during the period of significance (1901-1960). This period spans the years between the construction of the Complex's oldest existing building and the last one to be built in Kohler before the Company constructed its first plant outside the boundaries of the Complex and outside Wisconsin, this being the vitreous china manufacturing plant built in Spartanburg, South Carolina in 1961.

Listing the buildings within the Complex and describing them is complicated by the fact that the buildings have grown with numerous additions over the years. These large expanded and consolidated buildings are counted as a single resource. Fortunately, the company's record keeping has been excellent and the enclosed map of the site makes it possible to follow the evolution of the Complex's resources in detail. As the map shows, the Company has assigned every building or building addition a separate identifying number, which, when space permits, is usually placed in the upper right-hand corner of a building or addition's outline on the map. Because these numbers are an integral part of the Company's record keeping they will be used in this National Register nomination as well. Not included in the building count are several smaller buildings and structures located throughout the complex. These include various tanks and small storage buildings, many which are temporary in nature. For the purposes of the National Register nomination, the Complex contains the following resources, which can be found on the map, indicated by a larger circled number.(5) These resources will be discussed in more detail in the remainder of this section.

Inventory

<u>Resource Number*</u>	<u>Resource Name</u>	<u>Construction Date(s)</u>	<u>Status (NC or C)</u>
1. (1)	Old Main Office Building	1908	C
2. (73)	Main Office Building	1925	C
3. Gate 2 (and associated gate house)	Main Gate	1925	C
4. Gate 1	Old Main Gate	1908	C

* The Kohler assigned number follows in parentheses.

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Section 7 Page 3 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, WI

5. (5N, 5C, 5S, 53, 6N, 6NC, 6SC, 6S, 7, 8, 9, 10, 10A, 16, 17, 19W, 19E, 20, 21, 21A, 23C, 23E, 23W, 24, 25, 26E, 26W, 27, 60, 61, 62, 63, 66, 67, 68, 69, 77, 78)	Enamel Shop	ca.1901-1925	C
6.	South Gate	1920	C
7. (64)	Mill Building	1924	C
8.	South Wall	1920	C
9. (2, 75)	Powerhouse	1910/1926	C
10. (54)	Engineering Building	1920	C
11. (55, 56, 65, 70, 71, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 88, 97) (57, 87)	Foundry Foundry Building	1920-1950 1970-1974	C NC additions
12. (79, 91) (95)	Brass Building Brass Building	1926/1941 1967	C NC addition
13. (600, 601, 602, 603, 606) (606A)	Pottery Pottery	1928-1960 post-1960	C NC addition
14. (604)	Engine Plant	1960	C
15. (99)	General Equipment Storage Building	1956	C

The total count of contributing resources in the Complex is thus 11 contributing buildings, three of which have non-contributing elements, and four contributing structures.(6)

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Section 7 Page 4 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, WI

Resource Descriptions

1. Old Main Office Building 1908 C

This two-story, free-standing building (see photo # 4) was completed in 1908 to house the offices of the company.(7) It has a rectilinear plan, measures approximately 60-feet-wide x 50-feet-deep, has a poured concrete foundation, and exterior walls clad in cream brick. The building is a good, largely intact example of the Classical Revival Style. It is believed that the present four-light windows are replacements for the originals. Historic photos indicate that if they are replacements, then they are a very close match for the originals, which had a very similar design. The major change to the exterior of the building has been the addition of a small, cream brick, one-story gate house that is attached to the building's northeast corner and now house the keepers of what are now the main gates (Gate No. 1) into this part of the Complex. *Kohler of Kohler News*. November 1918, p. 3.

2. Main Office Building 1925 C

The present main office building (see photo # 1) is a freestanding, Romanesque Revival Style-influenced, rectilinear plan building that measures 211-feet-long by 65-feet-wide and which was designed by Richard Philipp of the Milwaukee architectural firm of Brust & Philipp. The symmetrical main facade faces west onto Highland Avenue and it consists of a four-story-tall 60-foot x 60-foot central block that is surmounted by a 110-foot-tall square-plan bell and clock tower. Flanking the center block are two longer three-story wings and the whole sits on a raised basement story having a poured concrete foundation. The walls of the building are clad in brown brick over building tile and are supported by a steel framework. The most notable feature of the interior is the 60-foot by 45-foot entrance hall, whose walls feature seven large mural paintings depicting processes of manufacturing employed in the manufacturing of the Company's products. These murals were painted by Arthur Covey and won a gold medal from the New York Architectural League when they were exhibited in New York prior to installation.

The only change that has impacted the exterior of this building has been the replacement of the original six-over-one-light windows with modern single pane ones and the similar simplification of the main entrance doors and the surrounding side and transom lights. Otherwise, the exterior of the building is still in a very intact state today. *Kohler of Kohler News*. August 1925, pp. 10-22.

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Section 7 Page 8 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, WI

11. Foundry Building 1920-1950 C

The Foundry Building is another of the very large consolidated buildings within the Complex that has evolved over a period of years. The first portion of this building was constructed in 1920 after the Company made the decision to embark on the manufacture of electric generator sets in 1919. This decision, plus the growth that the Company had already experienced, made the construction of additional foundry capacity a necessity. The result was this building, which gradually took over the making of all of the Complex's non-brass foundry needs. Regardless of their date of construction, all portions of this building feature steel frame construction, concrete foundations and floors, and mostly cream brick exterior walls into which large window openings are placed.

The original 1920 portion (Building No. 55) of the Foundry Building was first known as the North Foundry and the North Finishing Shop, to distinguish it from the South Foundry, which was then a part of what today is called the Enamel Shop. This Astylistic Utilitarian form portion measured 280-foot-wide by 250-foot-long (east-west) and it was one-story in height and it was also notable for being serviced by a very large traveling electric overhead crane whose associated steel track and trestle ran along the entire outside length of its north elevation.

Because this portion was originally intended to serve several different functions, and because these different functions had differing spatial requirements, the roofs that sheltered them were of different types. The northernmost parts were crowned by very large monitors that ran east-west, while the roofs over the southernmost half have a repeated sawtooth configuration and also ran east-west. This difference was also reflected in the cream brick-clad west-facing main facade of this portion, the upper part of which originally featured a stepped design that reflected the differing heights of the bays behind it. In addition, the height of the very large window openings in this facade also varied in accordance with the height of the bays behind them. Between 1938 and 1948, however, the northernmost part of the 1920 portion was rebuilt and a second story was added to it. Consequently, the facade of this part was also completely rebuilt and was made equal to the height of the tallest portion of the original building, as were the other parts of the original facade of the 1920 portion that had been lower before (see photo # 8). The result was to give the entire 1920 portion's west facade a uniform height, although its original appearance can still be seen in the varying height of the windows that pierce it. *Kohler of Kohler News*, February 1920, pp. 6-7 (photos); March 1920, p. 7 (photo); and December 1920, p. 16 (photo).

The first addition to the Foundry was constructed in 1921 just to the south of the first portion. This one-story-tall, Astylistic Utilitarian form addition (Building No. 56) was devoted to the finishing department of the foundry and featured a cream brick-clad west facade that was pierced with numerous grouped multi-light windows. Each group of windows was set within a very shallow, recessed panel that is surmounted by a stilted arch (see photo # 6). The tall parapet wall above these openings hides the west end of the building's sawtooth roof from view.

The second addition to the Foundry was constructed in 1924 just to the south of the previous two portions. This large addition (Building Nos. 65 & 70) was of the same basic design as the first addition and also utilized a sawtooth roof whose west end was hidden from view by an extension of the same cream brick west-facade that fronted the first addition.

The following year saw the construction of the first of several additions (Building Nos. 71, 80, 81, 82) that, between 1925 and 1927, would almost double the size of the existing foundry. These additions were added onto the east ends of the existing buildings and utilized the same basic designs as their predecessors.

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Section 8 Page 1 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

Statement of Significance

The proposed Kohler Company Factory Complex is a very large industrial complex located in the village of Kohler that is believed to be of statewide significance under National Register (NR) criteria A and C. Research was undertaken to assess the potential for nominating the Complex to the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) utilizing the NR significance areas of Architecture and Industry, themes which are also identified in the State of Wisconsin's *Cultural Resource Management Plan* (CRMP). This research centered on evaluating the resources within the complex utilizing the Astylistic Utilitarian form subsection of the Architectural Styles study unit and the Industry study unit of the CRMP. The results of this research is detailed below and shows that the Kohler Company Factory Complex is of statewide significance under National Register Criterion A as an historically important collection of mostly industrial buildings that together constitute one of Wisconsin's largest and oldest industrial enterprises. It is also eligible for listing under Criterion C as a well-defined and visually distinct geographic and historic entity whose highly intact individual and collected resources are also architecturally distinguished resources of this type and represent the work of Milwaukee master architect Richard Philipp.

The Kohler Company Factory Complex comprises most of the eastern half of the village of Kohler, in Sheboygan County. It is situated some four miles west of the city of Sheboygan and the Lake Michigan shore, and it comprises the world-headquarters of the Kohler Company and is the Company's oldest and largest manufacturing facility as well. The Kohler name is known throughout the world for its associations with the manufacture of plumbing fixtures and related products and also with the manufacture of gasoline and diesel-powered engines and generators. Indeed, it would be accurate to say that the Kohler Company is, along with the S. C. Johnson Co. (Johnson's Wax) and Harley-Davidson, one of the very small number of Wisconsin industrial firms that currently defines the term "Wisconsin Industry" in the eyes of the rest of the world. With annual sales exceeding \$2,800,000,000, the Kohler Company is one of the largest and one of the most important industrial concerns in Wisconsin. It is also one of the state's oldest continuously operated industrial firms, founded by John Michael Kohler in Sheboygan in 1873 and owned and operated continuously by his descendants ever since. Not surprisingly, the Company has played an enormous role in the history of Sheboygan County, having been the largest employer in the County for most of the last century.(9) In addition, the Company has been an important national leader in the plumbing industry since the 1920s, when it was the first to introduce bathroom fixtures in colors other than white, a considerable technological achievement, and the first to produce one-piece bathtubs with aprons that extended down to the floor. Today, the Kohler Company is the largest producer of plumbing and bathroom fixtures in North America. Consequently, the Kohler Company Factory Complex is believed to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its statewide significance under National Register Criterion A (History) because it is one of the oldest, largest, and most successful of Wisconsin's industrial concerns and because from 1899 until 1960 the plant in Kohler was the Company's sole manufacturing facility and its extant resources therefore constitute almost all the buildings that were ever associated with this period of the Company's history. In addition, the Complex is believed to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) for its significance under National Register Criterion C (Architecture) primarily because it exhibits a truly remarkable degree of integrity for resources of the type it contains. In addition, these resources are all good examples of national trends in factory design during the period of significance and most of them are the work of prominent Milwaukee architect Richard Philipp. Philipp was also the architect of almost all the buildings located within the planned community of Kohler itself, which is located just south and west of the factory complex and is, arguably, the most architecturally distinguished and coherent "company town" in the United States.

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Section 8 Page 2 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

Industry

As noted above, the Kohler Company had its beginnings in the nearby city of Sheboygan in 1873. John Michael Kohler (1844-1900) was a native of Austria who came to the United States with his family in 1854 and to Sheboygan in 1871. By 1873, Kohler and his partner, Charles Silberzahn, were able to buy the Union Steel & Iron Foundry in Sheboygan for \$5000.00. The firm employed 21 men and had been developed by Kohler's father-in-law, Jacob J. Vollrath. Kohler was the principal partner in the new firm and agricultural implements made up the bulk of its sales in its first decade. In 1878, Silberzahn sold his share in the firm to Herman Hayssen and John H. Stein, both of whom had been machinists with the company. When a fire destroyed the old foundry located at 9th St. and St. Clair Ave. in 1880, the new firm of Kohler, Hayssen and Stein erected a new and larger one just a few blocks away at the corner of 7th St. and Jefferson Ave. and continued operations. In 1883, Kohler made use of Jacob Vollrath's experience as an enameler to introduce a new line of enameled cast iron bathtubs based on the successful cattle troughs he was already making, thus setting the stage for the industry giant that would later evolve. By 1887, the partnership had become a corporation and was employing 65 persons.

In 1899, Kohler made the decision to move the foundry four miles to the west of the city to a 21-acre site the Corporation had purchased. A newspaper article of the day made it clear what the inducements of the site were.

This land fronts on the western division of the Chicago & Northwestern railway and Lower Falls road ... and the north front is on the Old Military road, which is located between the Upper and Lower Falls roads. It is three miles west from the C. & N W Co.'s city depot. This is a very desirable location for the plant. The Sheboygan River is only a few feet away from it and can be easily tapped for water supply. The Chicago & Northwestern Railway Co. will build sidetracks and a switch to the factory and the interurban street car line will also run by the plant.(10)

Not even the death of Kohler in November of the following year put a halt to the construction of the new plant, which originally consisted of a 360-foot by 66-foot brick foundry, a 360-foot by 66-foot enameling shop, and a 66-foot by 60-foot cleaning room building and employed 175 men. Indeed, the firm even survived the destruction of almost its entire plant by fire in 1901. At this time both Hayssen and Stein chose to sell out to Kohler's three sons, leaving the future destiny of the Company completely in the hands of the Kohler family, whose third and fourth generation members continue to manage it today. Subsequently, the damage to the plant was repaired and the factory reopened as J. M. Kohler & Sons in February 1902, and the earliest of the buildings that resulted from this rebuilding process are now the oldest buildings in the present factory complex.

The years from 1906 to 1919 would see the Kohler Company evolve into one of the leaders of the plumbing fixtures industry under the leadership of Walter Kohler, thanks to such important product innovations as the creation of a one-piece built-in cast iron bathtub with apron, which almost instantly became the industry design standard. Indeed, by the beginning of World War I, the Company had become the biggest employer in Sheboygan County, its work force having expanded to 950 people, nearly all of whom worked at the Kohler facility.(11)

To better understand the buildings that existed in the Complex up to 1919, the requirements of the Company at this time need to be understood. To make enameled cast iron products such as sinks and bathtubs, a molding area is needed to create the molds that give shape to the final product; a foundry is necessary to make and process the iron that goes into the molds; an enamel shop and a finishing shop are needed to create and apply the enamel to the cast iron product; storage space is

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Section 8 Page 3 Kohler Company Factory Complex
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necessary for the unprocessed iron, the molding sand, and the finished products; a powerhouse to run the plant is needed; and office space for sales and management has to be provided as well. In a small operation, all of these needs can be met by just a few buildings, but as the sales of a firm grow in size, so too does the need for more space. Even as late as 1919, the needs of the rapidly growing Kohler Company could still be met by steadily expanding the then existing factory plant, which consisted primarily of a very large combined foundry and enamel shop building, a warehouse/shipping building, a separate powerhouse, and a separate office building.

In 1920 the Company decided to diversify its product line in order to dampen the effects of the cyclical seasonal demand for its products that is a characteristic of the construction industry. This decision resulted in the creation of the Engine and Electric Plant Division, whose products consisted of the first gasoline engine-powered electric generator sets that were sized for home, farm, and small scale industrial uses. Before this, supplemental electric power for those off the power grid or for emergency purposes had come from small engines that had been used to charge large, cumbersome, and not very powerful banks of storage batteries, which, by their very nature were also limited in capacity. Kohler's new product line quickly found markets all over the world, including on board ships and trucks and in countless other applications. It also necessitated the construction of the Engineering Building in 1920, and its successful operations were soon thereafter moved into larger quarters in Building No. 83, built in 1927, and still later to their present home in Building No. 604, built in 1960.

Still more change occurred after 1925, when the Company decided to become a full line manufacturer of plumbing products to satisfy their nationwide network of dealers, all of whom had numerous customers that wanted to purchase all their plumbing fixtures from just one manufacturer.(12) This decision resulted in the creation of two important new product lines, both of which required totally new facilities for their manufacture. The first new product line was faucets; these were made out of brass and required separate foundry and finishing facilities. The result was the construction of the Brass Building in 1926, which was subsequently expanded in 1941. The second product line was vitreous china fixtures (toilets and bidets, etc.), which also required new facilities within which clay could be shaped and processed into finished products. This resulted in the creation of the Pottery Building, which was constructed in 1928, expanded in 1929-1930, and expanded again in 1960. By 1950, the Company employed 4000 people at its Kohler facility and was one of the ten largest manufacturing concerns in Wisconsin.(13)

Thus, the earliest contributing resources within the Kohler Factory Company Complex represent both the Company's original plant and the expansion of it that followed in order to meet the increasing demand for the Company's original product lines. This expanded plant was then supplemented by the creation of entirely new facilities that were constructed to manufacture new product lines, which were then expanded in their turn as demand for the new products grew. Remarkably, nearly all of this growth occurred within the buildings that existed in the Complex by 1930, the only sizable exceptions to this were the subsequent expansion of the Pottery Building and the construction of the new Engineering and Engine Plant, both of which occurred in 1960. More remarkable still is the fact that all of these buildings retain most of their original exterior appearance today. This high degree of integrity means that the contributing resources located within the Kohler Company Factory Complex today can be truly said to represent nearly the entire history of the Kohler Company in Kohler up until 1961, the year that the Company built a new plant in Spartanburg, South Carolina, the first Kohler-built plant to be located outside of Kohler and outside of Wisconsin.

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The opening of the Spartanburg plant marked the beginning of a new era in the Company's history, an era that has seen the Company become a highly successful multi-national enterprise. As *Forbes Magazine* noted in 1995:

A little over a century ago an Austrian immigrant named John Michael Kohler hit on the bright idea of enameling cast-iron horse troughs and selling them to Midwestern farmers as bathtubs. Today, the Kohler Co. is the undisputed king of the American bathroom. With sales of \$1.8 billion and net earnings of \$67 million, it long ago surpassed rivals American Standard, Crane Co., and Eljer Industries in bathroom fixtures.(14)

Today, Kohler Company plants are scattered throughout the world and employ some 19,000 employees. Never-the-less, 6000 of those employees continue to be based in Kohler, which is still the Company's principal manufacturing facility, the largest manufacturer in Sheboygan County, and one of the largest in Wisconsin. That this is still true today represents a remarkable ongoing commitment to the place of its birth on the part of the Company, which is now preparing to celebrate its 100th anniversary in Kohler as it enters the twentieth-first century. It is therefore believed that the Kohler Company Factory Complex is worthy of listing in the NRHP at the statewide level of significance because of the extraordinary place it has occupied and continues to occupy in the industrial history of the village of Kohler, of Sheboygan County, of the state of Wisconsin, and of the nation's plumbing industry.

Architecture

The Kohler Company Factory Complex is also being nominated to the National Register of Historic Places for its statewide architectural significance (Criterion C) because the resources contained within its boundaries represent a degree of integrity and design coherence that is quite remarkable for a 100-year-old factory complex that is still used for its original purpose today. The Complex's individual resources are fine, exceptionally intact examples of stylistic and engineering trends in factory design that were prevalent in the first half of the twentieth century. The buildings are a collection of industrial building design of the period. The complex as a whole is also remarkably intact and possesses an unusually high degree of architectural coherence that is largely due to the fact that almost all of its contributing resources are the work of just a single architect, Richard W. Philipp of Milwaukee, who designed them and most of the buildings in the adjacent Village of Kohler between 1916 and 1953. From its beginnings in 1899 up until the early 1950s, almost all the major buildings within the Kohler Company Factory Complex were built to the designs of just two architects; Charles Hilpertshauser of Sheboygan and Richard W. Philipp of Milwaukee.

Charles Hilpertshauser

Charles Hilpertshauser (1861-ca.1911) was born in the Town of Herman in Sheboygan County in 1861 to Swiss immigrant parents. He first worked as a carpenter with his father, Jacob Hilpertshauser (?-1890), a noted Sheboygan County carpenter and builder, but his more formal training took place in Chicago in the early 1880s, where he studied mathematics and geometry before apprenticing with Chicago architect John C. Cochran, the architect of the original state capitol of Illinois in Springfield. Hilpertshauser returned to Sheboygan in 1885 and in 1887 he opened his own architectural practice, which was one of the city's most important until his death circa 1911. Extant original drawings housed at the Wisconsin Architectural Archives in Milwaukee document some three hundred of his projects, which were located primarily in Sheboygan and surrounding communities and included private residences, schools, churches, fraternal lodges, town halls, hospitals, commercial buildings, and factory buildings. These buildings are not only of high quality but they also

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demonstrate Hilpertshauser's continuing ability to stay abreast of the changes that took place in trends in architectural styles during his lifetime.

Included among the many plans in the Hilpertshauser collection are plans for additions to the Kohler, Hayssen & Stehn Manufacturing Co. factory (non-extant) located at 702-722 Jefferson St. in Sheboygan, so it is not surprising that he was also the Company's choice for an architect when it came time for it to build its new factory complex at nearby Riverside in 1899. Surviving minutes of the Company's board of directors show that the building program for the new complex was prepared by Herman and Arthur Hayssen, who then submitted it to Hilpertshauser for the final design and for specification preparations.(15) No photographs or drawings depicting this complex have yet been found but the above mentioned minutes of the Company mention a "new foundry, cleaning shop, boiler and engine rooms, enamel shop, mill room, etc." As noted elsewhere, this complex was completed in 1900. On February 17, 1901, most of it, including "the enameling room, 360 by 66 feet, the foundry, 280 by 66 feet, and the cleaning room, 66 by 60 feet," was destroyed by fire.(16) Fortunately, the factory was well insured and rebuilding began immediately, production was shifted temporarily to the Company's then still extant Sheboygan foundry. It is not yet known whether or not Hilpertshauser was also associated with the rebuilding of the factory but it is possible that the oldest buildings in the current factory complex were also designed by him. What is known is that the new 1901 buildings were built along much more fireproof lines than the ones they replaced (ie. they had cream brick walls and monitor roofs that were supported by a steel framework instead of the wooden framework that had been the cause of the fire's spreading in the original factory buildings).(17)

Brust & Philipp (Peter Brust and Richard Philipp)

To a remarkable degree, most of the buildings included within today's Kohler Company Factory Complex reflect the design abilities of just one man, Richard W. Philipp, who was the principal architect in the Milwaukee firm of Brust and Philipp, one of the best and most important architectural firms practicing in Wisconsin in the early twentieth century.

Peter Brust (1869-1946) was born in the rural Town of Lake in Milwaukee County, on November 4, 1869. He learned the carpentry trade from his father, who was a carpenter/cabinetmaker and sometimes farmer. Brust entered the offices of the prominent Milwaukee architectural firm of Ferry and Clas in 1890 after working in several smaller offices since 1886. During the 1890s Brust worked with fellow draftsmen Richard W. Philipp and Richard Heimerl on Ferry and Clas projects including the Milwaukee Public Library and Museum, 814 Wisconsin Avenue, (1895-1899). Brust eventually became the chief draftsman for Ferry and Clas but left the firm in 1900 to take a similar position with a rival firm, H. C. Koch and Company. In 1905 he traveled to Europe with several other Milwaukee architects and in 1906 formed a partnership with Richard Philipp that lasted until 1926.

Richard W. Philipp (1874-1959) was born in Mayville, Wisconsin on May 2, 1874. Both his parents were born in Germany, and his father was a cabinetmaker and later operated a furniture factory. The family moved to Milwaukee in 1889. According to architectural historian Richard W. E. Perrin, Philipp "was a truly outstanding architect and a genuinely educated man despite the fact that he sat in no classroom following graduation from Milwaukee's East Division High School, and except for some private tutoring in the humanities from Dr. Gerhard Baslg."(18) After high school, Philipp apprenticed with Ferry and Clas, one of Milwaukee's most distinguished late nineteenth century architectural firms. Two other draftsmen in the Ferry and Clas office would later become Philipp's business partners: Peter Brust and Julius Heimerl.

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The Brust and Philipp firm employed thirty men at its peak. Julius Heimerl became a partner in 1911, but the firm of Brust, Philipp and Heimerl appeared in the Milwaukee city directories for only two years until 1913, when Heimerl apparently left to work independently. The firm worked mostly in the Period Revival styles ranging from the Neo-Classical Revival to Tudor Revival. During this time the firm designed many large residences for wealthy Wisconsinites and for Milwaukeeans in particular, such as the very large Tudor Revival style Gallun House, located at 3000 E. Newberry Blvd. within the Newberry Boulevard Historic District. It is for their residential work that the firm is best known today. Like most firms of the period they undertook a wide range of non-residential commissions, among them the Schuster's Department Stores in Milwaukee; the St. Joseph's Convent Chapel, 1501 S. Layton Blvd. in Milwaukee; as well as many other fine buildings throughout Wisconsin and the Midwest. After dissolving their partnership in 1926, both Philipp and Brust continued to practice independently. Philipp continued his own practice until his death in 1959. Brust, meanwhile, opened a small office and brought his sons Paul and John into the firm in 1929 and 1936, respectively, and remained active in the firm until his death on June 22, 1946. His new firm, Brust and Brust, remained active under the leadership of his sons and later his grandsons until at least the mid-1980s under a variety of names.

It is generally believed that Philipp was the principal designer in the firm and according to Perrin, Philipp's forte was the ability to create original designs within the Tudor Revival Style. Philipp had an early interest in English architecture. In 1898, while still working as a draftsman for Ferry and Clas, he won a \$50 prize in the *House Beautiful* magazine competition for the best house costing under \$3,000 for his design of a three-bedroom Tudor Revival style brick and shingle house. In 1899, Philipp made his first trip to Europe to study its architecture, followed by two additional trips before forming his partnership with Peter Brust in 1906. It was the expertise and familiarity with English styles that Philipp gained as a result of his study that resulted in his being chosen to design what would become his firm's largest and best known project, one that would continue to occupy him throughout the rest of his career. This was his work at Kohler, which would ultimately comprise virtually every built structure within the borders of the village and factory constructed between 1916 and the early 1950s.

The driving force behind the creation of the factory and the village of Kohler as it is today was Walter J. Kohler, Sr. (1875-1940), one of three sons of John Michael Kohler and one of the most remarkable business leaders in Wisconsin during the first half of the twentieth century. When Kohler's father and his associates decided to move their foundry from Sheboygan into the countryside in 1899, the land they chose was part of a 130 acre farm owned by N. J. Balkins. Once the factory portion of the land had been purchased by the Company, Balkins platted much of the remainder as the village of Riverside and by 1912 this community had a population of 300, most of whom worked in the Kohler factory.⁽¹⁹⁾ The unplanned and spontaneous products of this growth, however, left much to be desired. Thus, in 1913, after Riverside was incorporated as a village and was renamed "Kohler," Walter Kohler, the president of the Kohler Company, initiated a thorough study that was intended to create a more beautiful model community. To do this, Kohler first visited a number of "garden cities" in the United States and Europe "to gather as much as possible from the experience of others."⁽²⁰⁾ Such cities, with their emphasis on curvilinear street plans, sensitivity to topography, green belts, and the thoughtful locating of shopping areas and industrial "parks," represented the cutting edge of enlightened urban planning at that time and they also represented the model that Kohler wished to recreate in the Sheboygan County countryside. As luck would have it, Kohler met Richard Philipp on one of his earliest study trips to Europe and quickly realized that Philipp's knowledge and design ability could be a great asset in helping him realize his vision of an ideal industrial community. For Philipp, of course, this chance meeting turned out to be the opportunity of a lifetime and led to his playing a crucial role in giving form to Kohler's evolving vision. Subsequently, Kohler took Philipp with him on other European trips and what began as a professional relationship eventually developed into a lifelong friendship.

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Having arrived at a vision of what he wanted to create, Kohler then set about assembling a team of professionals who could help him build it. The overall plan of the village was begun by the planning firm of Hegemann and Peet and was completed by the Olmsted Brothers, a nationally known Boston, Massachusetts landscape architecture and planning firm that also provided landscaping advice and plans. Engineering services to implement the plans were provided by Jerry Donohue Engineering of Sheboygan, and architectural services were provided by Brust and Philipp, with Richard Philipp acting as lead designer.

Work on the first phase of the village, which is known as West One and is located just to the west of the factory across Highland Avenue, was begun just before World War I and was completed shortly afterwards.(21) This was then followed by the development of the portion known as South One, which is located just south of the factory across Lower Falls Road. By 1925, both portions had been largely completed and the buildings in them, besides single and two-family houses, included a school, combined village hall and fire department building, and a dormitory for unmarried workers known as the American Club, which was built in 1918 and then expanded in 1924 (NRHP, 5-22-78). All of these buildings were designed by Philipp, either directly or as the supervisor of others in his employ, and they generally exhibit either a marked English Arts and Crafts Style influence or else are examples of the Colonial Revival style. At the same time, Philipp was also designing Walter Kohler's own grand Tudor Revival style country home just outside Kohler. This superb residence, known as Riverbend Farm because of its location, was begun in 1921, was largely completed by 1923, and is still owned by the Kohler family and is in a highly intact state today (NRHP, 12-4-80).

In 1924, Philipp also designed the first portion of the Kohler Village Store building in the village and in the same year he also began work on a design for a new main office building on Highland Ave. for the Kohler Company, which was completed in 1925 (Building No. 2). Also in 1925, Philipp was honored by the American Institute of Architects, which made him a Fellow of the Institute, one of its highest honors. This honor was duly noted in the Kohler Company's monthly publication, the *Kohler of Kohler News*, which went on to say that:

Mr. Philipp has been closely associated with us for a number of years in connection with the village plan, the homes, public school, factory buildings, American Club, and the new office building.(22)

As this statement implies, Philipp was not only the principal designer of the buildings in the village, but was also the principal designer of the buildings within the factory complex. The information contained in the extensive Kohler Company Archives makes it clear that this involvement lasted throughout Philipp's professional life. Extant blueprints bearing the name of Brust and Philipp and extensive correspondence in the archives suggest that for projects connected with the factory, Philipp had a role with the Company similar to that of Charles Hilpertshauser before him, wherein members of the Company's engineering staff would develop the building program and then rely on Philipp to give the resulting building a satisfactory architectural appearance. So far as can be determined, Philipp played a major role in the design of every building in the factory complex built from 1916 until at least 1940, the year that Walter Kohler Sr. died. And in times when the Company was not actively involved in building major new additions to their plant, such as during much of the 1930s and 1940s, Philipp worked for them on a retainer basis and was asked for both designs and advice on everything from buildings to drinking fountains and model showroom designs.

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With the exception of the Romanesque Revival style-influenced Main Office Building, none of the buildings that Philipp designed for the factory complex are of exceptional architectural distinction. These buildings are basically of two types, being either one-story-tall steel frame "production sheds" (Building Nos. 5, 9, 10, and 11) or reinforced concrete multi-story "industrial lofts" (Building Nos. 7, 12, and 13), both types identified in *The Works*, Betsy Hunter Bradley's important new study on historic industrial buildings in the United States.(23) Bradley defines production sheds and industrial lofts as follows:

Production Shed: A one-story industrial building engineered to enclose spaces of considerable height and to have wide bays yet [with] the strength and stability to support overhead traveling cranes. A rectangular structure often of considerable width and with roof lighting.

Industrial Loft: A multistory building with relatively large, open floor areas—lofts—in which various types of light manufacturing operations are housed. The program of an industrial loft is to provide adequate light, ventilation, and materials handling devices for production areas [that are] as unobstructed as possible by columns and auxiliary functions such as elevators.(24)

Both of these types have their origins in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century industrial buildings, buildings that were typically constructed out of wood, stone, brick, or combinations of the three. Such buildings consisted primarily of work spaces that were defined solely by external and internal walls, floors, and roofs, all of which were typically supported by an internal wooden timber frame, and these buildings exhibited only the most elementary architectural design. The simplicity and utilitarian purpose of these astylistic utilitarian buildings, however, meant that those who designed them were also free of many of the constraints that applied to other building types. Industrial buildings were often the first to utilize new advances in power generation, materials development, and structural design, such as the development of electricity, reinforced concrete and the cast iron and steel in the second half of the nineteenth century. These three advances that revolutionized the way industrial buildings were built and could be organized. As Bradley notes:

The turn-of-the-century move to larger, consolidated, open plan structures was part and parcel of the changes brought about in industrial architecture by a 'technical triumvirate"—electric drive, the powered crane, and the steel frame ... Much larger production sheds were made possible by improved roof lighting and ventilation. Engineers also recognized that large structures with few dividing walls offered ease of supervision and elastic utilization of space. One large building was usually cheaper to erect and maintain than a number of smaller ones if roof spans were not excessive.(25)

Steel frame production sheds also had the decided advantage of being able to devote a large part of the surface area of their exterior walls to windows, which significantly increased the amount of daylight that could be made available for the production processes they housed.

For the Kohler Company, the move from the cramped urban downtown Sheboygan site that the Company had occupied in the nineteenth century to the open countryside of Riverside meant that it now had complete freedom to rethink its production plan and to design a plant that was optimized for its needs. This freedom found its first expression in the erection of several large interconnected production sheds in 1899-1900 that housed the enameling room, foundry, and cleaning room of the Company and featured brick exterior walls sheltered by wood frame roofs. Unfortunately, these frame roofs, along with the more open plan of the plant, contributed to the destruction of the first factory buildings in 1901,

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when a fire that apparently started near the chimney of the molding room spread to the roof and "then ran rapidly along the building until in a few minutes it had reached the enameling room, and in a short time, the whole of that building was also a mass of flame."(26)

Never the less, the new production sheds that replaced the ones destroyed in the fire were very similar in design, but their design featured noncombustible roofing and paid more attention to fire prevention. These sheds now form the core of the Enameling Building (Building No. 5) and they can still be plainly discerned today. In subsequent years, the Company took advantage of the ease with which such sheds could be expanded and added additional sheds alongside of the originals and also at the ends as well, resulting in the much larger consolidated production shed buildings (Buildings No. 5 and 11) that exist today.(27)

It was not until 1924 that the increased size of the Company and the attendant expansions of its product lines resulted in the construction of the first reinforced concrete industrial loft building in the Complex. This was the Mill Building (Building No. 7), built in 1924 to house the manufacture of the powdered enamel used in the enameling processes of the Company. This was immediately followed by the construction of other reinforced concrete buildings; the new Main Office Building (Building No. 2) built in 1925, the Brass Building (Building No. 12) built in 1926 and expanded in 1941, and the first portions of the Pottery Building (Building No. 13) which were built in 1928 and expanded in 1929 and 1930.(28) The use of reinforced concrete to construct these buildings was dictated in part by the needs of the manufacturing processes they housed and also by the need for large amounts of daylight to facilitate these processes. Again, to quote Bradley:

When constructed of reinforced concrete, the industrial loft attained a third reincarnation as a fireproof, vibration-free alternative to the production shed. Reinforced concrete was especially suited for the construction of industrial lofts for many reasons, not least of which was its strength. Though the floor load capacity of many reinforced floors was as much as 500 pounds per square foot, special floors were designed to carry much greater loads. ... The extensive window area and good lighting possible in concrete lofts were [also] used to advantage.(29)

An additional factor in favor of reinforced concrete buildings was their cheaper cost relative to their load bearing capacity. Even so, new production sheds also continued to be added to existing ones in the Complex until as late as 1960, when new methods of construction resulted in the erection of the present Engine Plant Building (Building No.14). This single building contains almost as much square footage under its roof as does the entire consolidated Pottery Building and its construction marks yet another phase in the history of buildings within the Kohler Company Complex.

The production sheds and industrial loft buildings within the Kohler Company Factory Complex are all fine representative examples of their particular type and are easily recognizable as such. What gives the Kohler Company Factory Complex's Astylistic Utilitarian form buildings their architectural significance is their integrity and their inclusion within the overall works of Brust and Philipp, most especially within the body of exceptionally important work that this firm produced for the Kohler Company and the Kohler family. Brust and Philipp was one of the most important architectural firms practicing in Wisconsin in the first quarter of the twentieth century and Richard Philipp's forty years of work for the Kohler Company is especially notable. This significance is strengthened by the exceptionally intact condition of the buildings within the Complex. The degree of integrity these buildings display is nothing short of remarkable considering the strictly utilitarian purposes they were designed to house. True, nearly all of these buildings have been altered over time, usually because of expansion activities, but these alterations almost all occurred within the period of significance

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(1901-1960) and they represent the normal evolution of resources such as these. In fact, one of the things that is so striking about these buildings is that they almost all achieved their final form by 1930. Only a few additions were constructed after that time and only three additions are considered to be non-contributing elements due to their recent date of construction.

Thus, the Kohler Company Factory Complex is believed to eligible for listing in the NRHP because when taken as a whole, the buildings within the complex comprise a virtual anthology of the most important Astylistic Utilitarian form design options that were applied to industrial buildings in the first thirty years of the twentieth century and their architectural significance is also greatly heightened by their high degree of physical integrity. In addition, the individual buildings that comprise it are, for the most part, the work of architect Richard W. Philipp, who is better known as the chief architect of the buildings in the planned community of Kohler that surrounds the factory complex

Criteria Consideration G:

The Period of Significance was extended to 1960 to include the Engine Plant Building (Building No. 14), constructed in 1960. It is believed that its inclusion within the Complex as the last contributing building is justified because it represents the last factory building built at Kohler before the Company built its first new plant outside of Wisconsin in Spartanburg, South Carolina in 1961. Including the Engine Plant Building and the much smaller General Equipment Storage building (constructed in 1956) within the contributing count of the Complex means that, save for those buildings destroyed in the 1901 fire at Kohler, all the buildings that have ever been associated with the manufacture of Kohler Company products at Kohler prior to 1961 will be included within the Complex. Consequently, the resources within the Complex illustrate the whole history of the Company and its historic achievements in Kohler and in Wisconsin up until the time that the Company began its evolution from a Kohler-based manufacturing firm into a national and ultimately an international one.

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Endnotes:

1. None of the earliest Sheboygan buildings that were associated with the Company before moving to Riverside in 1899 have survived. The J. J. Vollrath foundry that was purchased by John Michael Kohler in 1873 was a small frame building located at 9th Street and St. Clair Avenue and it was subsequently destroyed by fire in 1880. Likewise, the new foundry buildings that were built as replacements in 1880 at 7th Street and Jefferson Avenue have also now been demolished as well.
2. *The Sheboygan Telegram*, February 18, 1901. Pg. 1.
3. Highland Avenue was known as High Street for most of the period of significance.
4. One resource within the Village is already listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This is the American Club (419 Highland Drive), built in 1918 and expanded in 1924 (NRHP 5-22-78). Another has been declared eligible for listing: the Kohler Store Building (ca.411 Highland Drive), built in 1925 and expanded in 1927.
5. Resource numbers shown in boldface are the numbers used to create the NRHP resource count. The numbers within parentheses that follow represent the Kohler Company identifying numbers for these same resources. Building names used in the inventory will be for the purposes of this document only. Status is given as either Contributing to the Complex (C) or Non-Contributing (NC) and is so indicated on the large single map of the Complex that accompanies this document.
6. Several smaller buildings within the Complex boundaries have not been counted because of their small size and recent date of construction. The largest of these is Building No. 345, a gable-roofed metal-sided rectilinear plan building located just south of the east end of the Pottery Building.
7. This building (ca. 425 Highland Drive) is the oldest surviving main office building associated with the Kohler factory and it was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP in 1986 (DOE 2-18-86). It is known in this nomination as the Kohler Co. Medical Building, which was the new usage of the building after the current main office building was constructed in 1926. See also: *The Sheboygan Telegram*, April 27, 1907, p. 3; *The Sheboygan Herald*: March 27, 1907, p. 3; May 4, 1907, p. 3; July 6, 1907, p. 2; July 20, 1907, p. 4; August 3, 1907, p. 4.
8. Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance Maps of Sheboygan (and Kohler), Wisconsin. New York: 1903.
9. *Sheboygan Press*, May 21, 1973. An article in this issue of the Press noted that of the 6000 employees of the company as of that date, more than 5000 were located at the home plant in Kohler, making the Company the largest employer in Sheboygan County and one of the 10 largest in Wisconsin.
10. *The Sheboygan Telegram*, August 10, 1899. Pg. 1. This interurban line ran from Kohler east to Sheboygan and then south to Milwaukee.
11. Kohler Company. *Bold Craftsmen*. Kohler, 1973, p. 10. This is a 100th Anniversary publication produced by the Company.
12. A full line manufacturer makes not only the tubs and sinks but also the faucets and toilets as well. Thus, a builder need go to just one supplier for all his plumbing hardware needs, which, as the Company realized, is a decided competitive advantage.
13. Wisconsin Manufacturers Association. *Classified Directory of Wisconsin Manufacturers: 1950-1951*. Milwaukee: Wisconsin Association of Manufacturers, 1951. The ten largest manufacturers listed in this extensive statewide directory were: Allis-Chalmers Mfg. Co., 26,146 (West Allis); J. I. Case Mfg. Co., 14,692 (Racine); Wisconsin Telephone Co., 9697 (Milwaukee); A. O. Smith Co., 8000 (Milwaukee); Kimberly-Clark Corp., 7750 (Neenah); Cutler-Hammer Inc., 4035 (Milwaukee); Harnischfeger Corp., 4025 (Milwaukee); Kohler Co., 4000 (Kohler); Marathon Corp. 4000 (Rothschild); and the Joseph Schlitz Brewing Co., 4000 (Milwaukee). The next largest manufacturing concern in Sheboygan County was the Armour Leather Co., with 850 employees.

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Endnotes Continued:

14. Samuels, Gary. *Forbes Magazine*. October 16, 1995, p. 71.
15. Kohler, Hayssen and Stehn Board of Director's Minutes, 1887-1901, 8/1/99. Kohler Company Archives.
16. *The Sheboygan Telegram*, February 18, 1901, p. 1.
17. *Ibid*, February 17, 1902, p. 1.
18. Perrin, Richard W. E.. *Milwaukee Landmarks*. Milwaukee: Milwaukee Public Museum, 1979, p. 118.
19. Zillier, Carl (ed.). *History of Sheboygan County, Wisconsin: Past and Present*. Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Co., 1912, Vol. 1, p. 311.
20. *Kohler Village: A Hopeful and Stimulating Example of American Community Life*. Kohler: Kohler Co., 1925, p. 13.
21. West One also includes most of the houses that had been built in Riverside prior to its incorporation as Kohler. These buildings were not designed by Richard Philipp.
22. *Kohler of Kohler News*, May 1925, p. 11.
23. Bradley, Betsy Hunter. *The Works: The Industrial Architecture of the United States*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 146, 158.
24. *Ibid*, pp. 264, 267.
25. *Ibid*, p. 74.
26. *The Sheboygan Telegram*, February 18, 1901, p. 1.
27. The purest example of a production shed in the Complex now, and the only one that has not been expanded by later additions, is the first Engineering Building (Building No. 10), built in 1920.
28. Except for the Mill Building, all of these buildings are clad in cream brick.
29. Bradley, op. cit., p. 158.

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**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section 10 Page 1 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

UTM References Continued:

5	<u>16</u>	<u>437905</u>	<u>4843260</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
6	<u>16</u>	<u>437905</u>	<u>4843680</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
7	<u>16</u>	<u>437690</u>	<u>4843680</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
8	<u>16</u>	<u>437330</u>	<u>4843500</u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point on the east curbline of Highland Avenue that corresponds to the SE corner formed by the intersection of a service road located just to the north of the Main Office Building of the Kohler Co. (Building No. 2(73), the boundary line then continues South along said curbline approximately 1600-feet to a point on that curbline that corresponds to the NE corner of the ROW belonging to the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad, then turns 25° and continues approximately 1650-feet in a NE direction along the northerly edge of said ROW paralleling the railroad tracks. The line then turns 70° and continues North along the west curbline of a north-south running internal service road for approximately 1400-feet, then turns 90° and continues East along the north curbline of another internal service road that runs east-west parallel to the south side of the Engine Plant Building (Building No. 14(604)) for a distance of approximately 800-feet, then turns 90° and continues North along the west curbline of another internal service road that runs north-south parallel to the east side of the Engine Plant Building (Building No. 14(604)) for a distance of approximately 1300-feet, then turns 90° and continues West along the south curbline of another internal service road that runs east-west parallel to the north side of the Engine Plant Building (Building No. 14(604)) for a distance of approximately 800-feet, then turns 90° and continues South and runs along the east curbline of another internal service road that runs north-south parallel to the west side of the Engine Plant Building (Building No. 14(604)) for a distance of approximately 600-feet, then turns 90° and continues West along the north curbline of an internal service road that parallels the north side of the Pottery Building (Building No. 13 (606)) for a distance of approximately 1100-feet, then turns 90° and runs along the west curbline of another internal service road that parallels the west sides of the Pottery Building and the Brass Building (Building No. 12 (79)) for a distance of approximately 900-feet, then turns 90° and continues West along the north curbline of another internal service road approximately 400-feet to the Point Of Beginning. Said boundaries enclose approximately 89 acres, more or less.

Boundary Justification

The drawn boundaries encompass the historic period buildings associated with the Kohler manufacturing facility and offices during the period of significance.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section Photo Page 1 Kohler Company Factory Complex
Kohler, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin

Items a-d are the same for photos 1 - 16.

Photo 1

- a) Kohler Company Factory Complex
- b) Kohler, Sheboygan County, WI
- c) Timothy F. Heggland, October 24, 2000
- d) State Historical Society of Wisconsin
- e) Building No. 2, View looking E
- f) Photo 1 of 19

Photo 2

- e) Resource No. 3, View looking E
- f) Photo 2 of 19

Photo 3

- e) Building No. 9, View looking NE
- f) Photo 3 of 19

Photo 4

- e) Building No. 1, View looking E
- f) Photo 4 of 19

Photo 5

- e) Building No. 11 (83), View looking ENE
- f) Photo 5 of 19

Photo 6

- e) Building Nos. 9, 10 & 11, View looking N
- f) Photo 6 of 19

Photo 7

- e) Building No. 10, View looking SSW
- f) Photo 7 of 19

Photo 8

- e) Building No. 11, View looking SE
- f) Photo 8 of 19

Photo 9

- e) Building No. 12, View looking SSE
- f) Photo 9 of 19

Photo 10

- e) Building No. 13, View looking NE
- f) Photo 10 of 19

Photo 11

- e) Building No. 13 View looking SSW
- f) Photo 11 of 19

Photo 12

- e) Building No. 13 (606), View looking SE
- f) Photo 12 of 19

Photo 13

- e) Building No. 14, View looking NE
- f) Photo 13 of 19

Photo 14

- e) Building Nos. 5 (78, 69) & 11 (83), View looking W
- f) Photo 14 of 19

Photo 15

- e) Building No. 5 (78, 69, 25), View looking SW
- f) Photo 15 of 19

Photo 16

- e) Building No. 5 (78, 68, 67), View looking W
- f) Photo 16 of 19

Photo 17

- e) Resource No. 8 and Building No. 5 (67), View looking W
- f) Photo 17 of 19

Photo 18

- e) Resource No. 8 and Building Nos. 5 (67) & 7, View looking W
- f) Photo 18 of 19

Photo 19

- e) Building No. 5 (53), View looking NNE
- f) Photo 19 of 19

KOHLER COMPANY FACTORY COMPLEX

Kohler, Sheboygan Co., WI

--- District Boundary Line

▨ Not Contributing

Not to Scale

