



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# EcoNewsWire

## Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 8, 2020

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## Water Summary Update: Water Year 2020 ends on a dry note

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Tim Hall, Iowa DNR, 515-452-6633 or [Tim.Hall@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Tim.Hall@dnr.iowa.gov).

DES MOINES — Iowa's statewide precipitation was 3.76 inches below normal for the 2020 Water Year, according to the latest Water Summary Update.

The 2020 Water Year, running from Oct. 1, 2019 to Sept. 30, 2020, ended with a total of 31.51 inches of precipitation in Iowa. This period of time is used by hydrologists since Oct. 1 marks the end of the growing season, and precipitation after that date becomes a source of runoff into streams for the next calendar year. Temperatures in this time averaged 48.6 degrees, which is 0.5 degrees above normal for Iowa.

A majority of Iowa received below normal precipitation over the 2020 Water Year, with only northeastern Iowa receiving above-average totals of 3 to 9 inches. For the remaining portions of the state, precipitation deficits dominated, especially in western Iowa, where totals were between 10 to 18 inches below normal.

"Conditions continue to become drier as we move into the fall months," said Tim Hall, DNR's coordinator of hydrology resources. "This causes some concern as we see decreases in average rainfall from October into November. Replenishing soil moisture and groundwater becomes more challenging as we move toward the winter months."

The current drought monitor map, which reflects conditions as of Oct. 6, shows a return of extreme drought conditions. About 5 percent of the state is rated in extreme drought, while conditions have been moved from moderate drought into severe drought in other parts of northwest and western Iowa. Overall, the area of Iowa covered by some form of dryness or drought has not changed in the last month.

Temperatures were generally cooler across Iowa during September, with a statewide average temperature of 61.9 degrees, 1.3 degrees below normal. Spencer Municipal Airport (Clay County) reported the month's high temperature of 96 degrees on Sept. 6, 18 degrees above normal. Mason City Municipal Airport (Cerro Gordo County) reported the month's low temperature of 35 degrees on Sept. 18, 12 degrees below normal.

After the third driest August on record, widespread rainfall returned to Iowa during September. The statewide average precipitation totaled 4.06 inches, or 0.68 inches more than the 30-year average. Much of the eastern two-thirds of Iowa reported above average precipitation totals with the highest amounts occurring in eastern Iowa; 4 to 6 inches of above average rainfall were recorded across more than 10 counties. On the other side of the state, precipitation deficits from 1 to 2 inches were found. Northwest Iowa observed the driest conditions of 2 or more inches below normal.

For a thorough review of Iowa's water resource trends, go to [www.iowadnr.gov/watersummaryupdate](http://www.iowadnr.gov/watersummaryupdate).

The report is prepared by technical staff from Iowa DNR, the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship, IIHR—Hydroscience and Engineering, and the U.S. Geological Survey, in collaboration with Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department.

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## Contracts and rules up for Environmental Protection Commission's approval

**MEDIA CONTACT: Jerah Sheets at 515-313-8909 or [Jerah.Sheets@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Jerah.Sheets@dnr.iowa.gov).**

DES MOINES—Solid waste, wastewater and underground storage tanks are the topics of the Oct. 20 Environmental Protection Commission meeting.

Commissioners will meet by video conference at 9:30 a.m. To join by video, connect with <https://meet.google.com/rqw-nksu-aak>. To join by phone, call 216-505-9946, and enter the conference code of 208540651 followed by the pound (#) sign. The meeting is open to the public. There is no scheduled public participation. Written comments may be submitted up to one day before the meeting to Jerah Sheets at [Jerah.Sheets@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Jerah.Sheets@dnr.iowa.gov) or to DNR, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines, IA 50319.

Three contracts are up for commissioners' approval:

- A contract for environmental management services to assist participating communities in meeting their goals to reduce waste, improve water quality, decrease greenhouse gas emissions and provide environmental education.
- A contract to begin Phase 2 of the Sustainable Materials Management—Vision for Iowa initiative, a stakeholder-led process designed to update the more than 30-year-old integrated solid waste management system, focusing on health and environmental impacts of materials over their life cycles.
- The third contract is with an environmental service company to conduct site visits, testing and fuel recovery at leaking underground storage tank sites, and to complete risk evaluation reports.

Two final rules are up for approval. Commissioners will be asked to approve a final rule renewing the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit number 5 authorizing wastewater discharge associated with mining and processing facilities.

Also up for approval is a final rule to renew the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit number 7 that authorizes discharges that leave residue from biological and chemical pesticide application to waters of the United States.

Commissioners will also be asked to approve going forward with a rule proposal on underground storage tank professional licensing and certification requirements, changes to technical standards including equipment inspections and testing, and updates to owner and operator responsibilities.

Find the complete agenda at <http://www.iowadnr.gov/About-DNR/Boards-Commissions>.

Commissioners include: Ralph Lents, Menlo, chair; Harold Hommes, Windsor Heights, vice chair; Bob Sinclair, Sigourney, Secretary; Rebecca Dostal, Traer; Stephanie Dykshorn, Ireton; Amy Echard, Farmersburg; Lisa Gochenour, Logan; Rebecca Guinn, Bettendorf; and Howard Hill, Cambridge. Kayla Lyon is the DNR director.

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## DNR enforcement actions

**MEDIA CONTACT: Tamara McIntosh, DNR, at 515-725-8242**  
or [Tamara.McIntosh@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Tamara.McIntosh@dnr.iowa.gov).

DES MOINES – DNR staff work with individuals, businesses and communities to help them protect our natural resources by complying with state and federal laws. This approach is very effective. In the few cases where compliance cannot be achieved, the DNR issues enforcement actions. The following list summarizes recent enforcement actions. Find the entire, original orders on DNR's website at [www.iowadnr.gov/EnforcementActions](http://www.iowadnr.gov/EnforcementActions).

### **Consent Orders**

A consent order is issued as an alternative to issuing an administrative order. A consent order indicates that the DNR has voluntarily entered into a legally enforceable agreement with the other party.

#### **Dubuque County**

Troy M. Budde

Rescission of prior order.

#### **O'Brien County**

Nick and Kylee Massmann

Operate in compliance with applicable law and obtain a separation distance waiver or in some other way enter into compliance with mandatory separation distances if the facility ever operates at an animal unit capacity over 500 animal units.

#### **Worth County**

TCC Materials

Submit for approval an Operation and Maintenance Plan for all permit-required equipment and control equipment and pay a \$7,000 administrative penalty.

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## Air Quality permits under review

**MEDIA CONTACT: Marnie Stein, DNR, at 515-725-9525**  
or [Marnie.Stein@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:Marnie.Stein@dnr.iowa.gov) for Title V permits.

DES MOINES – The DNR Air Quality Bureau has the following draft permits up for review. The permits help protect Iowans' health and air quality. DNR's permitting staff review each permit application to ensure facilities comply with state and federal air quality requirements. We encourage public comments on draft permits, providing help on how to [make effective comments](#). Submit written comments to the assigned permit writer before 4:30 p.m. on the last day of the comment period. DNR considers public comments before finalizing the permits.

### Title V Operating Permits

Title V Operating permits are reviewed and re-issued every five years. Facilities with a Title V permit have the potential to emit large amounts of air pollutants compared to other facilities. The five-year reviews are a federal requirement and ensure adequate monitoring is included in the permit. The DNR plans to issue Title V Operating Permits for the following facilities. Find permit details at [www.iowadnr.gov/titlev-draft](http://www.iowadnr.gov/titlev-draft).

#### Polk County

MidAmerican Energy Co.: Pleasant Hill Combustion Turbines / Greater Des Moines Energy Center – 4401 Carlisle Road, Pleasant Hill.

The renewal application was submitted to operate their existing electric services production facility (SIC 4911). The public comment period ends Nov. 7.

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## A note on Iowa DNR and COVID-19

The Iowa Department of Natural Resources is working with state and local officials to reduce the spread of COVID-19 and has transitioned employees to work remotely. DNR offices are closed to the public during this time and only available by appointment.

In another effort to further reduce the spread of COVID-19, the DNR is encouraging the use of the online services for submitting applications, payments and other daily tasks and interaction with DNR staff.

- [Full list of DNR's online services](#)
- [Up-to-date information on DNR services, facilities and events impacted by COVID-19](#)
- [Technical information for regulated businesses in regards to COVID-19](#)

We thank you for your patience and flexibility during this time. If you need to contact DNR staff you can reach them by email or phone or by calling 515-725-8200.