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DNR Retirements

Russ Tell, Senior Environmental Specialist in the Iowa DNR Water Supply Engineering Section, is retiring on January 14, 2021, after 16 years leading the private wells program. During his long career, he has assisted local, county, regional, and state groundwater, and water supply-related programs. Prior to his employment at Iowa DNR, Russ worked for and owned a family well construction business, where he was a professional well driller for 25 years, with experience in water supply wells, water systems, and geothermal heating and cooling installations. He achieved the National Groundwater Association's Master Groundwater Contractor certification, which is the highest level of certification one can attain in that organization. He also worked for three years as a county environmental health officer. Russ has provided tireless, expert technical assistance to DNR, other public agencies and municipalities, water well organizations, and homeowners and landowners with water wells on numerous topics related to water wells and groundwater protection.

Russ and his wife Marsha both ride motorcycles. They have travelled by motorcycle in 43 states and 3 Canadian provinces, and plan to continue their travels as time allows. He will also spend more time with their children and grandchildren, co-manage a family farming corporation, work on projects around the house, and focus on his musical interests.

Tracey Lantz, Secretary with Iowa DNR Field Office 5 in Des Moines will be retiring on Friday, January 29, 2021. She has worked for 23 years for the State, the 17 most recent years with Iowa DNR, and previous work with the Conservation Commission in the Wallace Building in the 1970s, as well as other state agencies including Woodward State Hospital School (now Woodward Resource Center). She and her husband's retirement plans include more fishing, and photographing those big fish as well as their travels and animals in their woodland yard. She will also continue to garden and read more.

We wish for Russ and Tracey to each have long, healthy, and happy retirements.

EPA Announces Seventh Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey

The U.S. EPA has announced the seventh Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment (DWINSA). The survey is required under the Safe Drinking Water Act to be submitted to Congress every four years by EPA, and is an estimate of the infrastructure needs for the next twenty years. The Drinking Water State Revolving Fund grants are allocated to states based on the finding of the assessment. These funds help states to provide low-cost financing to public water systems for infrastructure improvements necessary to protect public health and to comply with drinking water regulations. In Iowa, 72 systems have been selected to participate in this survey, and will be contacted mid-month by Iowa DNR. Those systems and the Water Supply Engineering staff work to complete the surveys to ensure all eligible costs are included. The last DWINSA was conducted in 2015.

For more information, see [EPA's DWSRF website](#).

EPA Region 7 AWIA Workshops for Assessments and ER Plans

EPA Region 7 is sponsoring a free three-part virtual workshop to help community drinking water systems (CWSs) learn about the requirements of America's Water Infrastructure Act (AWIA). On October 23, 2018, AWIA was signed into law; Section 2013 requires CWSs serving more than 3,300 people to develop or update risk and resilience assessments (RRAs) and emergency response plans (ERPs). (Note: Under this law, the population also includes those people served in consecutive systems.) The law specifies the components that the assessments and ER plans must address and establishes deadlines by which water systems must certify to EPA completion of each.

The EPA is administering this law and its requirements in Iowa; for more information, please contact them at dwresilience@epa.gov. The assessment and plan are not submitted to EPA by the CWS; rather, those are retained at the CWS and a certification form for each is required to be completed and submitted. There is also a requirement for the CWS to evaluate each document every five years, in order to maintain a current assessment and plan.

This workshop contains three modules and each module requires a separate registration:

- Module 1 – AWIA Section 2013 Requirements, Certification, & Section 2018 Basics
- Module 2 - Risk and Resilience Assessments: Malevolent Acts, Natural Hazards, and the Small Systems Checklist
- Module 3 - Emergency Response Plan Template and Guidance

Who Should Attend: This virtual workshop is designed for CWSs serving 3,301-99,999 people. Note: the population includes any consecutive systems that are served by the CWS.

All CWSs, as well as vendors and consultants, especially those who are assisting CWSs in achieving AWIA requirements, are welcome to attend. EPA invites those who would like to lead a version of this AWIA workshop (e.g., technical assistance providers) to

attend in a “Train-the-Trainer” capacity. In this role, one can observe the workshop and receive presentation materials with speaker’s notes. At the end of Module 3, EPA will host a 30-minute Train-the-Trainer session to answer questions about using the materials provided to host one’s own trainings.

When and Registration:

- Module 1: Tuesday, 2/16/2021, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. CST, [Registration](#)
- Module 2: Wednesday, 2/17/2021, 1:00 – 2:30 p.m. CST, [Registration](#)
- Module 3: Thursday, 2/18/21, 1:00pm-3:00pm CST* [Registration](#)

*If you are attending as a trainer, please plan for a 30-minute Q&A session at the end of Module 3.

CEU: 1.5 hours Iowa WT or WD per module.

New EPA Webpage: Cybersecurity Best Practices for the Water Sector

From EPA’s Water Security Division news release, 1/6/2021

“EPA’s Water Security Division recently published the [EPA Cybersecurity Best Practices for the Water Sector](#) webpage. The new page contains cyber resilience resources available from EPA including the [Water Sector Cybersecurity Brief for States](#), [Cybersecurity Incident Action Checklist](#), Water Sector Cybersecurity Training and Response Exercises, and Water Sector Cybersecurity Technical Assistance Program. The webpage also provides information on available Department of Homeland Security Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) Alerts, including for the recent SolarWinds incident.”

Operator Certification: Continuing Education Opportunities

To find continuing education opportunities, please view the “Training Calendar” at programs.iowadnr.gov/opcertweb/. Training events where Iowa DNR staff will make presentations are listed below with the presentation name in the description. Also included are training events provided by EPA where Iowa CEU are granted, or events sponsored by Iowa DNR. See the listing on the appropriate date on the Training Calendar for registration instructions. Look at the calendar often, as there are new opportunities posted throughout the week.

- February 16, EPA R7 Module 1 AWIA Workshop, virtual. 1.5 hours CEU, WT or WD. [Registration](#).
- February 17, EPA R7 Module 2 AWIA Workshop, virtual. 1.5 hours CEU, WT or WD. [Registration](#).
- February 18, EPA R7 Module 3 AWIA Workshop, virtual. 1.5 hours CEU, WT or WD. [Registration](#).

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](#)
- [Current 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.