



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

EcoNewsWire

Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Water Summary Update: Despite average July rainfall, extreme drought returns to Iowa

MEDIA CONTACT: Tim Hall, Iowa DNR, 515-452-6633 or Tim.Hall@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES — Iowa received 3.98 inches of rain in July, slightly less than normal, according to the latest Water Summary Update.

Rainfall was above normal in the western and southern parts of the state, and below normal in central and northeastern areas. The continued lack of rainfall led to the expansion of drought conditions in Iowa, and the return of the extreme drought classification for the first time since April.

About 75 percent of the state is rated in some level of drought, with severe drought covering over one quarter of Iowa, and extreme drought covering almost 7 percent of Iowa. Since early July, drought conditions have improved across western and southern Iowa, but have deteriorated in east central and northeast parts of the state. The extreme drought designation covers the largest area of the state in nearly a year.

This dryness is reflected in decreasing streamflows in central and north central Iowa, and continued concern for shallow groundwater supplies in some areas of the state. The area of concern for shallow groundwater has shifted from northwest Iowa to north central Iowa.

"The rain that the state received in late July was needed, and where it came we have seen improvement in conditions. As we move through August we anticipate increased demand for water, and unless we see normal to above normal rainfall in the driest parts of the state, conditions could deteriorate," said Tim Hall, DNR's coordinator of hydrology resources. "The area of most concern, northwestern Iowa, has seen much needed rainfall, and conditions have improved there."

Since the last water summary update, streamflow conditions across approximately half of the state remain in the below normal condition.

About 82 percent of the subsoil in northwest Iowa is rated as being short of very short of moisture, while soil moisture levels in west central and central Iowa are 77 percent short or very short. Soil moisture levels are generally better across the southern third of the state.

In the Missouri River basin, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers noted that runoff for July in the upper basin was just 34 percent of normal. Forecasted runoff for 2021 is expected to be 14.6 million acre feet - which is four times less than the runoff in the flood years of 2011 and 2019.

For a thorough review of Iowa's water resource trends, go to 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.

Rule changes and contracts dominate Environmental Protection Commission agenda

MEDIA CONTACT: Jerah Sheets at 515-313-8909 or Jerah.Sheets@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES—Rule changes and contracts are up for discussion at the Aug. 17 meeting of the Environmental Protection Commission.

This meeting will take place by video conference at 10 a.m. To join by video, connect with <https://meet.google.com/pcd-ryjg-uoq>. To join by phone, call 240-794-2779, and enter the PIN code of 934 190 235 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 or to DNR, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines, IA 50319.

Rescission of a rule that required recovering mercury switches from scrap vehicles is up for final approval.

Also up for approval, a final rule adopting several new federal air quality standards, such as measuring air pollutant emissions. This rule will ensure Iowa is consistent with federal laws and not any more stringent.

Commissioners will be asked to approve rule changes to the dam safety program, consolidating most of the rules into one chapter. Proposed changes will bring Iowa's regulations up to national standards and help people know when a permit is required.

DNR will ask the commission to approve going forward with a proposal to bring waste tire management rules into alignment with recent changes in state law.

In other action, contracts up for approval include:

- provide mentoring in the Beaver Creek Watershed to increase conservation practice adoption north of Des Moines. The focus is on soil health and edge of field practices.
- supporting a public water system in Jackson County to provide safe, reliable drinking water from the city of Bellevue to several small and disadvantaged communities,
- an amendment to continue work of protecting the Iowa Great Lakes watershed and improving water quality, and
- acquire laboratory support for DNR's PFAS action plan.

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

Commissioners include: Ralph Lents, Menlo, chair; Harold Hommes, Windsor Heights, vice chair; Stephanie Dykshorn, Ireton, secretary; Brad Bleam, Rockwell City; Rebecca Dostal, Traer; Amy Echard, Farmersburg; Patricia Foley, Huxley; Lisa Gochenour, Logan and Mark Stutsman, Hills. Kayla Lyon is the DNR director.

Any person participating in the public meeting who has special requirements such as those related to mobility or hearing impairments should contact the DNR or ADA Coordinator at 515-725-8200, Relay Iowa TTY Service 800-735-7942, or Webmaster@dnr.iowa.gov, and advise of specific needs.

DNR enforcement actions

MEDIA CONTACT: Tamara McIntosh, DNR, at 515-725-8242 or 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.

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.

Benton County

GenoSource, LLC

Obtain an animal feeding operation construction permit and make any necessary modifications to the facility to comply with the issued permit; and pay a \$5,000 administrative penalty.

Air Quality permits under review

MEDIA CONTACT: Marnie Stein, DNR, at 515-725-9525
or 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.

Clarke County

Altec Osceola Body Plant – 1001 Furnas Drive, Osceola

The application was submitted to operate their existing truck and bus bodies facility. The public comment period ends Sept. 4.

Pottawattamie County

Gable Corporation – 10420 Bunge Ave., Council Bluffs

The application was submitted to operate their existing computer preparation and processing services facility. The public comment period ends Sept. 4.