



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Iowa DNR News

Environmental Services

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Snow melt, rainfall and flooding cause wastewater discharges in parts of the state.

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DES MOINES—Heavy rainfall, fast snow melt, ice jams and flooding starting in northwest Iowa caused several wastewater discharges from city treatment plants.

While fast stream currents and cold water are the biggest risk for recreation, high waters can also carry dangerous debris and bacteria. “For their own safety, we’re recommending people stay out of the water until several days after streams return to normal,” said Ted Petersen, supervisor of DNR’s Des Moines field office.

“Rapid snow melt and rainfall overwhelmed city treatment plants causing several communities in western and southern Iowa to report wastewater discharges,” Petersen said. “With more rain predicted, similar issues are likely to occur in north central and northeast Iowa in the next few days.

“Some cities have reported wastewater and storm water backups into basements,” he added. Both the Iowa DNR and the Department of Health have helpful links for people [dealing with disasters](#) and [flood cleanup](#).

“Also, weather conditions have left some livestock facilities facing nearly full storage structures,” he added.

City and industrial wastewater treatment plant managers should report bypasses, and livestock facilities that expect to discharge should contact their local DNR [field office](#). “We’ll work with them to identify solutions and minimize impacts to the communities and nearby streams,” Petersen said.

After hours, facilities can call the DNR emergency spill line at 515-725-8694. The DNR website has more information about [spill reporting requirements](#).