



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

EcoNewsWire

Environmental Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 14, 2020

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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.

Contracts and water rules on EPC conference call agenda

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

DES MOINES—Contracts, grants and proposed water rule changes are on the Environmental Protection Commission's May 19 agenda.

Commissioners will meet by teleconference at 10:30 a.m. The meeting is open to the public via conference call by dialing 216-505-9946 and entering 208 540 651 # following the prompt. 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.

DNR will present information about the popular derelict building program, which is designed to remove environmental hazards, improve community appearance and minimize costs by recycling and reusing building materials. Generally, grants totaling \$400,000 per year are available for rural communities of less than 5,000 residents to remove or renovate abandoned buildings.

Also up for approval, changes to drinking water and wastewater rules for delegation of construction permitting authority. The updates allow local public works departments and rural water systems to permit sewer and water main extensions. Changes to budget criteria used to evaluate water use annual fees and publishing public notices for water use permits are also up for approval.

Commissioners will be asked to approve the following contracts:

- University of Iowa State Hygienic Laboratory to collect water samples, fish and invertebrates; analyzing the samples to assist DNR in assessing the health of Iowa's waters,
- Iowa Prison Industries to extend a contract to digitize oversized documents,
- Region XII Council of Governments in Carroll to audit participants in the Environmental Management System program, a voluntary program for solid waste planning areas that promotes environmental stewardship and continuous improvement.
- Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for a targeted watershed project in the Iowa Great Lakes.

The complete agenda follows:

- Approval of Agenda
- Approval of the Minutes
- Monthly Reports
- Director's Remarks
- Derelict Building Grant Program Overview
- Derelict Building Grant Program – Grant Recommendations
- Contract with the University of Iowa – Ambient Biological Assessment
- Adopted and Filed Rules: Chapters 9 and 50
- Contract Amendment #1 to Contract # 19ESDLQBACLARK-0001 with Iowa Prison Industries
- Contract Amendment # 4 to Contract 16ESDLQBGOLD1 with Region XII Council of Governments
- Contract with Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship for Iowa Great Lakes Targeted Watershed Project
- Final Rules: Air Quality Regulatory Certainty Rules Part 4 - Chapters 20, 22, 23, 25, 30, and 33
- General Discussion
 - Biennial EPC Report
- Items for Next Month's Meeting

- June 16 at 10:30 a.m. – EPC Business Meeting – Location TBD
- July 21 at 10:30 a.m. – EPC Business Meeting – Location TBD

Find more information 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; Stephanie Dykshorn, Ireton; Amy Echard, Farmersburg; Lisa Gochenour, Logan; Rebecca Guinn, Bettendorf; and Howard Hill, Cambridge. Kayla Lyon is the DNR director.

Water Summary Update: April cooler, drier than normal

MEDIA CONTACT: Tim Hall, Iowa DNR, 515-725-8298 or Tim.Hall@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES — With average rainfall about 2 inches below normal and temperatures about 2 degrees below normal, April was cooler and drier than usual, according to the latest Water Summary Update.

In April, Iowa received 1.59 inches of precipitation, or 1.92 inches below normal. Streamflow levels continue to decrease, and groundwater levels show a decline in some areas of central and northeast Iowa. These trends continue the reversal of the extended pattern of wet weather that existed across the region for much of 2018 and 2019.

"After two years of very wet weather, we are starting to see some drying out around the state, as evidenced by the Abnormally Dry areas designated this week by the U.S. Drought Monitor," said Tim Hall, DNR's coordinator of hydrology resources. "We are entering the typically wettest season for Iowa, so if we receive normal precipitation in the months ahead, we should be able to make up for any dryness we are seeing now."

Conditions continue to improve in the Missouri River Basin, with 58.9 million acre feet, or 83 percent of the designated flood control storage, available to store runoff from mountain snowmelt and rainfall events. This is significantly better than conditions from last year, and is close to the long-term average for the system for this time of year.

March statewide temperatures averaged 46.8 degrees, 2.1 degrees cooler than the 30-year climatological normal. Red Oak and Shenandoah reported the month's high temperature of 87 degrees on April 7, 26 degrees above normal. The lowest temperature of the month came from Estherville at 9 degrees on April 15, 24 degrees below normal.

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

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.

For copies of the orders below, contact Kelli Book at Kelli.Book@dnr.iowa.gov. Older actions can be found 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.

Sioux County

Josh Hulstein

Submit manure management plan update and 2019 fee, and pay a \$3,000 administrative penalty.