



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Check Iowa's latest report on your public drinking water

MEDIA CONTACT: Diane Moles at 515-725-0281 or Diane.Moles@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES—Just released, DNR published the annual report on the public drinking water program, compiling a list of how well Iowa's public water supplies comply with state and federal regulations. The federal Safe Drinking Water Act requires DNR to collect data and report any violations of health-based standards, and major monitoring or reporting requirements that occurred in the previous year.

"In its simplest form, it's a report card for the 1,855 public water supplies regulated by DNR," said Lori McDaniel, chief of DNR's water quality bureau. "Our compliance rate is high with nearly 96 percent of all public water systems meeting all health-based standards, and roughly 83 percent meeting major monitoring and reporting requirements."

Almost 96 percent of the 2.96 million people served by Iowa's public water supplies received drinking water that complied with all health-based standards, a slight improvement over earlier years. Approximately 93 percent of the population received water from systems that met all major monitoring and reporting requirements.

"Anyone can look at the report to see if the public water they drink has met all standards and requirements during the previous year," McDaniel added.

There are two types of health-based standard violations: acute violations that can pose an immediate or acute risk to human health, and chronic violations, which have adverse health effects that occur with long-term exposure. With any violation, the system must notify the public about the violation and actions taken to remedy the situation. DNR may

also set additional monitoring and treatment requirements at the system, to ensure the water is safe to drink.

To find out more about the public drinking water program, the requirements for systems and DNR's role in helping them meet requirements, read the [Public Drinking Water Program 2019 Annual Compliance Report](#).

Check Appendix B to see if your public water supply had a violation in 2019. Or, read the annual Consumer Confidence Report from the public water supply that serves your home. By July 1, each community water supply must produce and distribute an annual report of that system's water quality, including water source, any violations, and monitoring data ranges for the past five years. Many public water supplies enclose these reports in water bills or newsletters sent to the people they serve. The report may also be available on their website.

The Iowa DNR has primary oversight and enforcement responsibility for the state drinking water program. "The water operators' daily work efforts yield the success we see in compliance," McDaniel said. As public health professionals, operators have the knowledge to comply with federal requirements, working to keep Iowans' drinking water safe.

DNR works with public water supplies to ensure Iowans have safe water to drink. DNR water engineers and specialists issue permits for existing and new facilities, reviewing proposals to ensure design, construction and monitoring requirements will protect water. Staff conduct on-site inspections, provide technical assistance, monitor compliance and certify public water supply operators.

City of Newell lifts water advisory after tests show water safe

MEDIA CONTACT: Scott Wilson at 712-363-4607 or Scott.Wilson@dnr.iowa.gov.

NEWELL—The city of Newell in Buena Vista County lifted a "do not use" water advisory Wednesday night after laboratory test results showed the city's drinking water is clear of mercury contamination.

There was no detection of mercury in water samples in drinking water taken at five sites (two wells, the drinking water plant, water tower and in the distribution system). Residents can safely resume using tap water for all uses.

The city issued the "do not use" water advisory Wednesday after the water supply operator noticed a small amount of mercury in a wastewater drain at the city's treatment plant. The city is working to properly remove the mercury from the building.

Look for updates on the city's Facebook page.

Water Summary Update: 35 percent of state classified as abnormally dry

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

DES MOINES — Although statewide precipitation was near normal in June, northeast Iowa experienced extra wet conditions while western parts of the state have entered moderate drought, according to the latest Water Summary Update.

The U.S. Drought Monitor shows abnormally dry conditions in about 35 percent of the state, with eight west-central counties classified as being in moderate drought.

Statewide precipitation averaged 4.85 inches in June, or 0.17 inches less than the 30-year climatological average. However, the state's western half observed drier than normal conditions with precipitation deficits of up to four inches. On the other hand, much of eastern Iowa reported general rainfall totals from two to six inches above average, due in part to the remnants of Tropical Storm Cristobal, which moved through Iowa as a tropical depression on June 9. Cristobal is only the second tropical system on record to transverse Iowa, with the only other occurrence happening on September 11, 1900.

"June saw low rainfall amounts in western Iowa and is causing concern about growing drought conditions. Unfortunately, the western part of Iowa tends to be where groundwater supplies are the most vulnerable, so we will be watching those areas carefully," said Tim Hall, DNR's coordinator of hydrology resources.

Iowa experienced warmer than normal conditions statewide during June with an average temperature of 72.9 degrees, 3.2 degrees below normal. This ties June 2020 with 1954 and 2005 as the 18th warmest June on record.

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.

Meetings announced regarding lower Missouri River flood risk management

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

DES MOINES -- Three upcoming stakeholder meetings will help identify and prioritize problem areas along the Missouri River as part of a larger multi-state effort to address flooding in the lower Missouri River basin.

The meetings will be held virtually via Zoom on July 28, 29 and 30. Details on times and connection information is available at iowadnr.gov/simra.

This effort is in response to near-historic levels in the Missouri River in 2019. The unprecedented amount of runoff resulted in the lower Missouri River staying above flood stage at multiple locations for nearly nine months, causing billions of dollars of damage to homes, businesses, agricultural production, levees and natural resources across five states, including Iowa.

The meetings will all follow the same agenda and will be open to discussion of the entire length of the Missouri River in Iowa. During these meetings, participants will be asked to identify specific problem areas along the river that lead to flooding issues and to provide potential solutions if possible.

Once problem areas have been identified by state partners and stakeholders, a set of criteria will be developed to rank and prioritize them. That prioritized list, along with any other relevant background information and ideas for potential solutions, will be provided to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for further analysis.

The information gathered and analysis completed will be documented in a flood risk management plan for the entire lower Missouri River, which can be used at the state and local level to help inform flood risk management decisions moving forward.

The project is a partnership between the Nebraska Department of Natural Resources, the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, Kansas Water Office, and the Kansas City and Omaha districts of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

DNR Food Storage Capacity Grant application period ends July 15

MEDIA CONTACT: Tom Anderson, DNR, at tom.anderson@dnr.iowa.gov or 515-725-8323

DES MOINES — Following a significant response in applications for its Food Storage Capacity grants, the DNR will close the grant application period on July 15.

Funds have nearly been exhausted for the grant program, which helps organizations expand the storage and cold storage of donated food items for distribution to food insecure Iowans.

“Response to this initial grant offering shows a real need facing food pantries and others as they redistribute food staples and fresh produce to Iowans in need,” said Jennifer Wright, Supervisor of DNR’s Financial and Business Assistance section.

At this time, 23 awards have been approved for funding, totaling \$133,608. Projects typically involve the purchase of cold storage (freezers and refrigerators) to reduce spoilage and increase the amount of perishables including fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and eggs that can be stored and safely distributed to Iowa households and individuals.

Future funding allocation to reopen the grant offering is being investigated.

Questions regarding the Food Storage Capacity Grant offering should be directed to Tom Anderson at tom.anderson@dnr.iowa.gov.

Air Quality permits under review

MEDIA CONTACT: Chris Kjellmark, DNR, at 515-725-9537 or Chris.Kjellmark@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.

Black Hawk County

Bertch Cabinet Manufacturing/Wood Cabinet Facilities – 4747 Crestwood Drive, Waterloo.

The application was submitted to operate their existing Wood Kitchen Cabinets facility. The public comment period ends Aug. 8.

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.