



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Water Supply News

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## Iowa Announces COVID-19 Residential Utility Disruption Prevention Program

*From the Office of the Governor, October 9, 2020*

### **Financial Assistance Available to Eligible Low-Income Iowans for COVID-19 Utility Disruption Prevention**

“DES MOINES – Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) today announced the launch of the new Residential Utility Disruption Prevention Program. The program will provide eligible households with up to \$2,000 towards electric, natural gas and water bills if they are at risk of disconnection due to an inability to pay due to a COVID-19 related loss of income. Payments through the program will be made directly to utility providers and applied to the applicant’s account.

“We are facing an unprecedented pandemic and from the very beginning the state has made it a priority to provide critical assistance to families, farmers, renters, homeowners, and small business owners,” said Gov. Reynolds. “For Iowans who lost their job or saw their paycheck shrink as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Residential Utility Disruption Prevention Program will help them keep the power on and their water running.”

The state allocated approximately \$14.5 million of federal CARES Act funds for utility assistance programs (the Small Business Utility Disruption Prevention Program launched in mid-July). To be eligible to receive assistance, a residential electric, natural gas and/or water utility customer must have:

- A primary Iowa residence with active residential utility accounts, renters may apply as long as the utility account is in the applicant’s name;
- An unpaid utility bill balance or have previously entered into a payment plan with their utility provider;
- An annual income that is 80% of the median family income, based on county and household size

- Experienced a COVID-19 loss of income (job loss, reduction in hours, reduction in pay) on or after March 17, 2020 that resulted in hardship in paying bills for electric, natural gas, and/or water utility service provided between March 17, 2020 and October 31, 2020.

“Iowans, especially our low-income citizens have been greatly impacted due to the COVID-19 pandemic,” said IEDA and Iowa Finance Authority Director Debi Durham. “We are proud to make available this program offering to help our most vulnerable maintain critical utility services.”

For a full list of eligibility requirements, additional information and to apply, visit the [Iowa Housing Recovery - Iowa Finance Authority website](#).

Applications will be accepted between October 8, 2020, and November 20, 2020, or until funding is depleted, whichever comes first. Assistance will be awarded based on application completeness and eligibility in order received until all funds have been exhausted.”

## **New AWWA Guide Addresses Stagnant Water in Buildings with Low Occupancy**

*From AWWA / IAPMO Press Release, 10/7/2020*

“At a time when many buildings are not fully occupied due to COVID-19, the American Water Works Association (AWWA) and the International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials (IAPMO) have developed a guide (30 pages, .pdf) to help building managers address water system stagnation.

Stagnation within building water systems is a concern in periods of low or no occupancy. When water does not move through the system, water quality issues may arise at an outlet, a group of outlets or throughout an entire building water system, causing potential health risks.

Titled [Responding to Stagnation in Buildings with Reduced or No Water Use](#), the guide “provides a decision-making framework for building managers to design responses to building water system stagnation,” said William Rhoads, a co-author of the guide and a post-doctoral researcher at Virginia Tech.

Peter DeMarco, executive vice president of advocacy and research at the IAPMO Group (International Association of Plumbing and Mechanical Officials), said the new document provides essential guidance at a crucial time.

“As buildings reopen across the country, it will be critically important for building owners and facility managers to actively address water quality concerns in plumbing systems due to stagnation,” he said. “We appreciated the opportunity to work with Dr. Rhoads and the other authors on the development of this important guidance document.”

Because of the many differences in building water system operation and design, one set of instructions is not appropriate for all buildings. The guide provides a framework for building managers and a resource that water systems can utilize in supporting the business community in their service areas.”

This document can assist water systems, local government, and other agencies communicate with building owners and prepare to assist building owners. The authors based the guide on existing EPA and CDC guidance, and worked to align the guide with relevant ANSI accredited standards. The [AWWA's COVID Water Resource Page](#) has updates to any guidances as well as other complementary material.

## Cybersecurity Incident Action Checklist

*From the EPA Water Security Division, 10/5/2020*

It's national Cybersecurity Awareness month.

"In order to prepare, respond and recover from a cyber-attack, utilities must first identify their vulnerabilities and mitigate the risk from a cyber incident. The [Cybersecurity Incident Action Checklist](#) (6 pgs, .pdf) is a "rip and run" document that outlines actions your utility and IT staff can take today to achieve cybersecurity and resilience."

All types of incident checklists are available on EPA's [water utility response website](#).

## FY 2020 SRF Annual Report Now Available

Iowa's SRF issues two documents each year for the Clean Water SRF and the Drinking Water SRF Programs: Intended Use Plan (IUP) and Annual Report. The Intended Use Plans are published at the beginning of the year and outline the goals and objectives for each program area. Annual Reports are published at the end of the year and show results, accomplishments, and how well the goals and objectives were met.

The Iowa State Revolving Fund (SRF) has provided almost \$3.9 billion in cumulative assistance as of SFY 2020 and continues to be an effective and cost-efficient mechanism for financing projects to protect water quality and public health.

Detailed information is included in the fiscal year [2020 SRF Annual Report for the Clean Water and Drinking Water Programs](#) (.pdf, 86 pages) covering July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020.

## Operator Certification: Continuing Education Opportunities

To find continuing education opportunities, please view the "Training Calendar" at [programs.iowadnr.gov/opcertweb/](http://programs.iowadnr.gov/opcertweb/) Training events where Iowa DNR staff will make presentations are listed below. 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.

- October 13-15, 2020, IA-AWWA Virtual Fall Conference, "Iowa DNR Water Supply Rules Update." See the [website](#) for the brochure and registration information. This year's conference is free.
- October 26-27, IRWA Fall Water Conference, Peosta (note site change). "IDNR Water Supply Rules Update." See the [website](#) for the brochure and registration information.

- November 17, IAMU Water Operators Conference – Distribution, virtual. “IDNR Water Supply Rules Update.” See the [website](#) for registration information.

## **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.