



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Wastewater 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

Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds and the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) 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 Governor 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 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 an existing payment plan with their utility provider;
- An annual income that is 80% of the median family income, based on county and household size; and
- 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 and additional information, or 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.

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: an Intended Use Plan (IUP) and an Annual Report. The Intended Use Plans are published at the beginning of the year and outline the goals and objectives for each program area. The Annual Reports are published at the end of the year and show results, accomplishments, and how well goals and objectives were met.

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

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

IAWEA Fall 2020 Virtual Wastewater CEU Series

The Iowa Water Environment Association (IAWEA) is hosting a Fall 2020 Virtual Wastewater Continuing Education Unit (CEU) Series consisting of six online modules in September, October, and November 2020 presenting high quality presentations on a variety of wastewater topics. Participants will receive continuing education credits or professional development hours. Registration options include individual modules, the entire series, and site registrations. Three modules are still available.

- **Module 4, 10:00 a.m. to Noon on Thursday, October 22** - special flash presentation session. Attendees will hear 7 short presentations on diverse subjects including management topics, security, permit issues, and process.
- **Module 5, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon on Thursday November 5** - learning through Plant Case Study Lessons.

- **Module 6, from 10:00 a.m. to Noon on Thursday November 19** - covers the Unspeakables. Those of you involved in preliminary treatment and biosolids handling know what this session is about.

Virtual Series Links:

- [Session Agendas](#)
- [Registration](#)
- IAWEA [Event Website](#)

Conference Sponsorships are Available – Sponsorships are priced at \$50.00 and sponsors will be able to upload their logo to be displayed during the sessions. You can register, upload your logo, and submit payment through the conference registration process even if you don't attend the sessions.

Operator Certification: Continuing Education Opportunities

To find continuing education opportunities, please view the Training Calendar on the [Iowa DNR Operator Certification site](#). 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. Use the links provided below to see the conference/training brochures and registration information.

- October 13-15, 2020, [IA-AWWA Fall Virtual Workshop](#). This year's conference is free.
- October 28-29, [IRWA Fall Wastewater Conference, Peosta](#).
- November 17, [IRWA WW Operator Basics](#), Virtual Zoom training; contact drichardson@iowaruralwater.org for more information
- November 24, 2020, 26th Annual Water/Wastewater Operator's Workshop Online Conference - Wastewater Treatment Track, [registration website](#) and [brochure](#), contact smarsh@iamu.org for more 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](#)

- [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.