



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 12, 2020

- [Environmental Protection Commission to review proposed rule update](#)
- [Public comment sought on Section 401 water quality certification of nationwide permits](#)
- [Water Summary Update: Dry conditions prevail in western Iowa](#)
- [DNR announces Food Storage Capacity Grant offering](#)
- [Air Quality permits under review](#)
- [A note on Iowa DNR and COVID-19](#)

Environmental Protection Commission to review proposed rule update

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

DES MOINES—A proposal to begin updating underground tank rules is up for approval at the Environmental Protection Commission's Nov. 17 business meeting.

Commissioners will meet by video conference at 9:30 a.m. To join by video, connect with <https://meet.google.com/rqw-nksu-aak>. To join by phone, call 216-505-9946, and enter the conference code of 208540651 followed by the pound (#) sign. The meeting is open to the public. 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.

The proposed rule changes will update professional licensing and certification programs for underground storage tank inspectors and testers; improve detecting and preventing petroleum releases (a leading cause of groundwater contamination); and update outdated provisions and code language.

Going forward with proposed rule changes will enable DNR to maintain its delegated authority to administer underground storage tank regulations under the federal Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

In other action, commissioners will be asked to approve a maintenance contract for the online air quality permitting application system, the Iowa Environmental Application System (EASY Air).

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

Public comment sought on Section 401 water quality certification of nationwide permits

MEDIA CONTACT: Christine Schwake, DNR, at 515-725-8399 or Christine.schwake@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES – The DNR is seeking public comments on draft 401 water quality certification—the DNR’s certification that projects affecting streams, lakes, wetlands or on the floodplains will not violate state water quality standards. The 401 certification from DNR is required by state and federal law before the Corps of Engineers can issue a Section 404 permit.

The DNR also recently completed a draft 401 rationale, alternatives analysis, and social and economic importance review for 52 reissued and five new Army Corps of Engineers nationwide permits.

Written comments on the proposed certification or 401 rationale, alternatives analysis, and social and economic importance review are due by 4:30 p.m., Dec. 10. Please submit comments by mail to Iowa DNR, Christine Schwake, 502 E. Ninth St., Des Moines, IA 50319 or by email to Section401WQC@dnr.iowa.gov.

Copies of this notice, the draft certification, the 401 rationale, alternatives analysis, and social and economic importance review are available at <https://www.iowadnr.gov/Environmental-Protection/Water-Quality/Wetlands-Permitting> or by requesting the information by email to Section401WQC@dnr.iowa.gov.

Water Summary Update: Dry conditions prevail in western Iowa

MEDIA CONTACT: Tim Hall at 515-452-6633 or Tim.Hall@dnr.iowa.gov.

DES MOINES—Rainfall in Iowa was almost an inch below normal in October, averaging 1.66 inches over the state, according to the latest Water Summary Update.

"While October saw some improvement in conditions in the state, overall the precipitation was below normal," said Tim Hall, DNR’s coordinator of hydrology resources. "As we move into normally drier months, replenishment of soil moisture and shallow groundwater becomes more challenging. We continue to hope for normal to wetter than normal conditions over the next couple of months."

While about one-third of the state is free from drought and dryness, drought conditions and shallow groundwater supplies remain a concern in northwest and west central Iowa. October rainfall was below normal. Drought conditions are most severe in Sioux, O’Brien and Clay counties, and counties on their borders. Normal to above normal rainfall is needed in order to improve those conditions.

The October precipitation map shows wetter than average conditions in eastern Iowa, with more than two inches of precipitation in a few northeastern counties. Overall, precipitation fell one to two inches short over much of the state. That leaves a swath of low stream flows in the middle of the state, while conditions are normal throughout most of Iowa.

Iowa temperatures averaged 46.0 degrees or 4.8 degrees below normal for October, placing October 2020 as the sixth coldest on record. The coldest conditions occurred in northwestern Iowa.

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, IHR—Hydroscience and Engineering, and the U.S. Geological Survey, in collaboration with Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department.

DNR announces Food Storage Capacity Grant offering

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

DES MOINES — The DNR is offering a second round for applications for a grant opportunity to help address food waste, an issue that negatively impacts environmental, economic and social sustainability in Iowa and across the country.

The competitive grant opportunity helps efforts to expand storage and cold storage of donated food. Food banks, food pantries and other non-profit organizations receiving donated food for distribution to food insecure Iowans are eligible to apply.

Information and application materials can be downloaded at www.iowadnr.gov/FABA. Applications will be reviewed on an ongoing basis until available funds have been awarded.

Air Quality permits under review

MEDIA CONTACT: Sarah Piziali, DNR, at 515-725-9549 or Sarah.Piziali@dnr.iowa.gov for construction 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.

Construction Permits

DNR engineers review and issue construction permits to facilities before they build new or modify existing sources of air pollution. The public may review the following air quality construction permits available online at www.iowadnr.gov/airpermitsearch OR through the [EASY Air Public Inquiry Portal](#) and then click the Public Notice tab.

Muscatine County Grain Processing Corporation – 1600 Oregon St., Muscatine. Project No. 20-197, Permit modifications for (DH4 Dryers and Aspiration) EP311.0, (Gluten Dryers 1,2,4) EP318.0, (DHS Feed Milling) EP603.0, and (Expellers) EP545.0 to amend PM2.5 emission limits based on testing. The public comment period ends Dec. 12.

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