



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Water Summary Update: Recent rainfall should help improve drought conditions

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DES MOINES — With seven days remaining in June, Iowa precipitation totals remain 2 inches below normal with nearly the entire state in some form of dryness or drought, according to the latest Water Summary Update.

As a result of this lack of rainfall, streamflow is down across the state, and concern remains for shallow groundwater availability. Severe drought now covers almost 44 percent of the state, up from only eight percent at the start of June.

"Current and near term projected rainfall should help ease drought conditions, although the U.S. Drought Monitor for this week does not include rain that fell after Tuesday morning," said Tim Hall, DNR's coordinator of hydrology resources. "Conditions prior to this new rain show continuing deterioration, but we are anticipating improved conditions next week. The next Water Summary Update on July 10 should show a better situation in Iowa."

Hot and dry conditions blanketed the state for much of the first half of June as the jet stream remained farther north, allowing a stable dome of high pressure to block the normal storm track through the Midwest. As of June 23, the preliminary statewide average precipitation is 1.51 inches, tying 1956 as the eighth driest start to June on record, with seven days remaining. A drier start was last reported in 1992.

This week, a more active storm track returned to the Midwest, bringing much needed rainfall across the state, along with several days of severe hail and high wind reports. Recent temperatures have been more seasonal compared to the first two weeks of June, when multiple days of upper 80s and 90s were reported. The preliminary statewide average temperature through June 23 is 79.6 degrees, 4.6 degrees above normal.

Since the last Water Summary Update, streamflow conditions across approximately a quarter of the state are now classified as "much below normal," including the Skunk, Des

Moines, Raccoon and Little Sioux river basins. Most of the state's streamflows have now moved into "below normal" conditions.

Soil moisture levels across the state continued to decline in June. One year ago, more than 90 percent of the state had adequate or surplus soil moisture. As of June 21, only about one third of the state had adequate or surplus soil moisture.

The number of Iowa water utilities that have put in place voluntary or mandatory water use restrictions has expanded, but recent cooler and wetter weather has decreased demand. This should help reduce stress on most water systems, and to lower the short-term concern for water availability. A return to hot and dry weather could reverse this change, and Iowans should contact their local water utility with any concerns they may have for their area.

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

Four safety tips to enjoy fireworks, protect sensitive people

Note: This is a joint press release from the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the Iowa Department of Public Health and the State Fire Marshal's office.

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As much as we love fireworks displays, drifting smoke can cause breathing problems for some and drought conditions may pose additional risks this year.

Dry conditions and the threat of fires may cause some towns to take extra precautions with fireworks displays. Whether attending a display or celebrating in your backyard, keep these four safety tips in mind.

"First, if your family or friends suffer from asthma or respiratory difficulties, it's important for them to stay upwind, a safe distance from fireworks smoke," says Brian Hutchins, DNR air quality supervisor. "The elderly and children are also vulnerable to high levels of smoke."

Sensitive people are most likely to have trouble breathing when air is stagnant. With no breeze, fine particles can be trapped near the ground and build to unhealthy levels.

Smoke contains fine particles and gases, which can be hard on the lungs. Fine particles in fireworks' smoke are produced from black powder used to shoot fireworks skyward along with the metals that produce brilliant colors.

Those unable to avoid areas of dense smoke should limit outdoor activity and contact their health care provider if experiencing difficulty breathing.

Second, while fireworks and celebrations go together, remember fireworks can cause serious burns and eye injuries. The Iowa Department of Public Health encourages families to make sure an adult supervises fireworks and keeps young children from playing with or igniting them. Keep fireworks pointed away from you and others when igniting them, and back up quickly after lighting. If fireworks don't ignite or burn fully, don't try to relight them or pick them up. Keep a bucket of water or hose on hand to respond to a fire or mishap.

The Iowa Department of Public Health reports there were seven inpatient hospitalizations and 15 hospital admissions for emergency room treatment related to fireworks injuries last year. Check for more safety tips from the [Consumer Product and Safety Commission](#). Check with local authorities for restrictions on shooting fireworks inside city limits. Note that fireworks are prohibited in state parks; only sparklers are allowed.

Third, play it safe if dry conditions prevail at your location. Shooting off fireworks is no fun if they ignite a fire, burning lawns or nearby fields. It's also smart to check the State Fire Marshal's website at <https://dps.iowa.gov/divisions/state-fire-marshal> for any countywide burn bans. According to the State Fire Marshal Division, municipalities and citizens are allowed to shoot fireworks despite a countywide burn ban. However, if fireworks are determined to start a fire while a burn ban is in effect, responsible persons could be charged.

"If you're going to shoot fireworks, it's always good to keep a bucket of water or a garden hose handy in case of fire, and never point or shoot fireworks at another person," says State Fire Marshal Dan Wood. "With the severe drought throughout the state, it's also a good practice to keep fireworks at least 300 feet from structures and dry vegetation."

If fireworks are allowed, place your launchpad on a hard, flat spot such as bare dirt or concrete. Avoid areas with trees, grass or buildings that might catch fire. For more consumer safety information from the State Fire Marshal Division, visit "[Make Sure Your Fourth Rules](#)" web page.

Finally, play it safe and [dispose of your unused fireworks](#) carefully. Safe storage and disposal protects you, your family and your waste haulers. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has [fireworks guidelines for businesses](#).

Last year, fine particle levels [exceeding national standards](#) were recorded in Davenport, Des Moines and Muscatine on the Fourth. Des Moines exceeded the standard again the following day. Learn more about [fine particles \(PM2.5\)](#) and how [fireworks displays](#) can affect sensitive populations.

DNR enforcement actions

**MEDIA CONTACT: Tamara McIntosh, DNR, at 515-725-8242
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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. Find the entire, original orders on DNR's website 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.

Marion County

City of Knoxville

Submit a facility plan for its wastewater treatment facility by Dec. 31, 2024 and cease all bypasses by Dec. 31, 2027.

Air Quality permits under review

MEDIA CONTACT: Marnie Stein, DNR, at 515-725-9525 or Marnie.Stein@dnr.iowa.gov for Title V permits; or 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.

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.

Jefferson County

ANR Pipeline Company – Birmingham Compressor – 2795 Locust Ave., Birmingham. The application was submitted to operate their existing Natural Gas Transmission facility. The public comment period ends July 24.

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.

Linn County

Vantage Corn Processors, LLC – 1425 60th Ave. S.W., Cedar Rapids.

Project No. 21-167, Vantage Corn Processors (VCP), LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of Archer Daniels Midland and operates an ethanol dry mill in Cedar Rapids. VCP has applied for a series of minor modifications to existing Prevention of Significant Deterioration sources. These modifications are to correct permit details to more accurately reflect the equipment originally installed. This change does decrease some emission limits associated with the fire pumps. However, the modification is not expected to significantly alter the emissions profile from the equipment covered by this project. The public comment period ends July 24. Submit all comments in writing before 4:30 p.m.