



IOWA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

# Wastewater News

## Environmental Services

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## General Permit No. 5 Rulemaking: Public Hearing

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) wastewater general permit for mining and processing facility discharges, otherwise known as General Permit No. 5 (GP7), will expire on July 19, 2021. The Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) is proposing to renew the permit for a forth five-year term. Proposed changes to the permit include formatting, minor revisions to simplify existing language and improve clarity, additional definitions, and the inclusion of applicable existing state rules. The permit's definition for "Waters of the United States" is also being updated to reference the June 22, 2020, federal definition.

A public hearing on the proposed GP5 will be held via conference call at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, September 2, 2020. Persons who wish to attend the conference call should contact David Schelling via email at [david.schelling@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:david.schelling@dnr.iowa.gov). A conference call number will be provided prior to the hearing. Persons who wish to make oral comments at the conference call public hearing must submit a request to David Schelling prior to the hearing.

Written comments can be submitted until 4:30 PM on Friday, September 4, 2020. Please send written comments via email to David Schelling at [david.schelling@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:david.schelling@dnr.iowa.gov) or by mail to David Schelling, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319.

[View the Proposed GP5](#)

Questions regarding the renewal can be directed to David Schelling at 515-725-8407 or [david.schelling@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:david.schelling@dnr.iowa.gov).

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## General Permit No. 7 Rulemaking: Public Hearing

The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) wastewater general permit for pesticide discharges, otherwise known as General Permit No. 7 (GP7), will expire on May 17, 2021. The Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) is proposing

to renew the permit for a third five-year term. Proposed changes to the permit include formatting and other minor revisions to simplify existing language and improve clarity. The permit's definition for "Waters of the United States" is also being updated to reference the June 22, 2020, federal definition.

A public hearing on the proposed GP7 will be held via conference call at 2:00 PM on Tuesday, September 1, 2020. Persons who wish to attend the conference call should contact Melinda McCoy via email at [melinda.mccoy@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:melinda.mccoy@dnr.iowa.gov). A conference call number will be provided prior to the hearing. Persons who wish to make oral comments at the conference call public hearing must submit a request to Melinda McCoy prior to the hearing to facilitate an orderly hearing.

Written comments can be submitted until 4:30 PM on Friday, September 4, 2020. Please send written comments via email to Melinda McCoy at [melinda.mccoy@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:melinda.mccoy@dnr.iowa.gov) or by mail to Melinda McCoy, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Wallace State Office Building, 502 East 9th Street, Des Moines, IA 50319.

[View the Proposed GP7](#)

Questions regarding the renewal can be directed to Melinda McCoy at 515-725-8402 or [melinda.mccoy@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:melinda.mccoy@dnr.iowa.gov).

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## September Sponsored Project Application Deadline Extension

Due to the widespread impacts resulting from the August 10th derecho that swept through much of Iowa, the next SRF Water Resource Restoration Sponsored Project application deadline has been extended from September 1st to September 15th in order to provide extra time for those impacted by the storm to complete their applications.

Questions about the Sponsored Project application requirements or timing can be directed to Lee Wagner at 515-725-0992 or [lee.wagner@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:lee.wagner@dnr.iowa.gov).

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## 2020 WTFAP Grant Application Now Available

The 2020 Wastewater and Drinking Water Treatment Financial Assistance Program (WTFAP) application is now available.

Grants will be awarded to water and wastewater projects based on the following priorities:

- Disadvantaged communities
- Projects that will significantly improve water quality in their watershed
- Projects that use alternative wastewater treatment technologies (all projects proposing alternative technologies must be approved by DNR)
- Communities with the highest sewer or water rates
- Projects that use technology to address nutrient reduction
- Projects that will improve source waters for drinking water utilities

## [2020 WTFAP Application](#)

Applications are due September 25.

The grant awardees are determined by a committee consisting of the Secretary of Agriculture (or designee), the Executive Director of IFA (or designee) and the Director of DNR (or designee).

Please contact the [Water Quality Team](#) with questions.

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## **DNR Drinking Water and Wastewater Treatment Operator Exams**

### **Remote Proctoring of Certification Exams**

Iowa's Drinking Water and Wastewater operators, pre COVID19, took proctored, standardized certification exams either at DMACC Southridge Computer Lab or, by appointment, at one of the Iowa DNR Regional Field Offices. Due to the ambiguity of when, and if, these venues will again be open to the public, Iowa is switching to remote proctoring. In mid September, operators will be able to take Drinking Water or Wastewater certification exams on any computer that has a camera and microphone; anytime, any quiet secluded place.

Once an operator logs in to an exam using the provided link and put in their unique number assigned upon eligibility, their browser is frozen; a proctor from the testing company can see them through the computer camera; their surroundings are monitored for extra materials or cheating; and the test session is recorded for future reference if there are any cheating suspicions or accusations. The testing company will provide a YouTube video and live customer support for any technical issues arising during a remote session.

Post Covid19, our operators will have two options for exam delivery: remote proctoring and our traditional method of on-line at an Iowa DNR Field Office or Community College computer lab.

### **How do operators get signed up for a remotely proctored exam?**

IDNR will send out letters; utilize the DNR listserves and post on our website all information relative to an operator's new testing options when we have a more finite start date. Potential examinees should monitor our [OpCert Webpage](#); all information will be posted here the minute it is finalized.

Please contact Laurie Sharp at [laurie.sharp@iowa.dnr.gov](mailto:laurie.sharp@iowa.dnr.gov) or 515/725-0284 with any questions.

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## **Operator Certification - Continuing Education Opportunities**

The Iowa DNR [Training Calendar](#) has up to date information on virtual and future "in person" opportunities.

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.

- September 28-29, 2020, IRWA Fall Water Conference, Okoboji. “IDNR Water Supply Rules Update.” See the [IRWA conferences website](#) for the brochure and registration information.
- October 13-15, 2020, IA-AWWA Virtual Fall Conference, “Iowa DNR WS Rules Update.” See the [AWWA virtual annual conference website](#) for more information.
- October 26-27, IRWA Fall Water Conference, Dubuque. “IDNR Water Supply Rules Update.” See the [IRWA conferences website](#) for the brochure and registration information.

In addition, operators can sign up for the Drinking Water listserv by contacting Diane Moles at [diane.moles@dnr.iowa.gov](mailto:diane.moles@dnr.iowa.gov).

Please contact Laurie Sharp at [laurie.sharp@iowa.dnr.gov](mailto:laurie.sharp@iowa.dnr.gov) or 515/725-0284 with any questions.

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## 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.