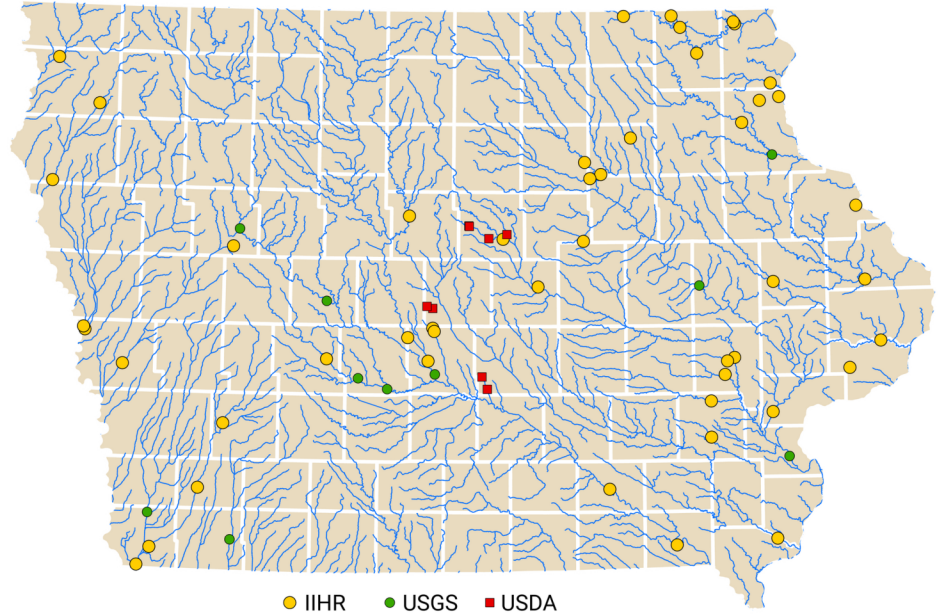


# PROTECT IOWA'S WATER MONITORING NETWORK TO DRIVE INFORMED SOLUTIONS

## WATER QUALITY IS A SIGNIFICANT CONCERN AMONG IOWANS. REINSTATING AND EXPANDING FUNDING FOR WATER MONITORING IS CRITICAL.

In 2023, the state legislature moved \$500,000 in funding for the water quality monitoring network managed by the University of Iowa's IIHR-Hydrosience and Engineering at the University of Iowa. As a result of the budget change, the public stands to lose access to data from 60 sensors statewide. This is a direct threat to Iowans' health and safety, while public concern over drinking and recreational water quality continues to mount.

## ABOUT THE IOWA WATER QUALITY INFORMATION SYSTEM



Data collected from each sensor is made available in real-time to the public through the Iowa Water Quality Information System (IWQIS), developed by IIHR. IWQIS is a best-in-class information system that allows the user to see current and historical data from a watershed perspective, combined with rainfall and other relevant hydrologic, land-use, and community data. Funding the maintenance and upkeep of this platform is paramount for public awareness.

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- 1** IEC supports the restoration of \$500,000 to be reappropriated directly to the water quality monitoring program through IIHR. In addition, the network requires an additional \$100,000 in ongoing funding to restore sensors to previous levels and account for inflation, and a \$500,000 one-time payment to replace aging equipment.
- 2** Iowa's worsening water quality puts human health at risk. Iowa has the second-highest cancer rate in the nation. Public beach advisories due to pollution reached a 10-year high in 2025. We need the solid science and real-time data provided by Iowa's water quality monitoring network in order to understand the full picture — and develop informed solutions to protect our health.
- 3** Reliable monitoring data is essential for addressing both water quality and water quantity challenges. Hydrologic models for flood risk, water supply, and well drawdown all depend on high-quality data inputs. Communities and watersheds need access to timely data to make sound infrastructure and planning decisions.

# WHAT'S IN THE WATER? IOWANS DESERVE TO KNOW.

**IOWA'S WATER QUALITY MONITORING NETWORK HELPS TO TEST THE EFFECTIVENESS OF CONSERVATION PRACTICES IDENTIFIED BY THE NUTRIENT REDUCTION STRATEGY AND DEFINE AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT.**

Sensors are placed in Iowa rivers that flow to the Mississippi and Missouri rivers. They provide data to both rural and municipal water utilities across the state, including some of Iowa's largest metropolitan areas.



There is no other publicly available monitoring network in the state that provides water quality data at the same scale and level of detail as the Iowa Water Quality Information System. It is a state-of-the-art, nationally recognized asset. In fact, other states are modeling their systems after Iowa's. In 2024, Minnesota's state legislature mandated and funded the creation of a network that reads nitrate levels in rivers and streams 24 hours per day and makes the data available to the public.

**Iowa residents are demanding more accountability for water quality across the state. The IWQIS network is the first step in determining the source and scale of pollution impacting our drinking and recreational water. The Iowa legislature has the opportunity to invest in IIHR's innovative technology while benefiting Iowa's many residents, farmers, and visitors.**

## “ Des Moines Register

For years, Iowans have begged their state lawmakers to agree on something they can do to restore and protect the state's putrid waterways and lakes. The problem is every bit as severe and as urgent as in the past, so water quality again tops our to-do list for the Legislature. Advocates have been explicit for a long time about steps that could help and are within the state's means.

— Des Moines Register Editorial, 11/30/2025 ”



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