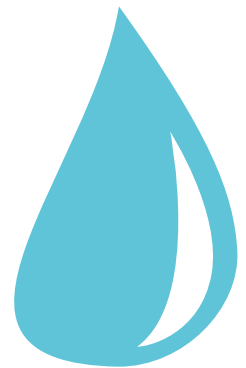


# FACT SHEET:

## A LOOK AT IOWA'S WATER HISTORY

For many decades, Iowans have worked together to identify and enact solutions to improve the state's water quality. This timeline highlights the progress that has been made during the past 83 years.



Date	Event/milestone
<b>1936<sup>1</sup></b>	Water Resources Committee of the Iowa State Planning Board published reports on "water use and conservation" in six major drainage basins.
<b>1949</b>	Iowa Natural Resources Council was created to establish a comprehensive statewide program for surface water and groundwater resources.
<b>1956 to 1959</b>	Iowa Natural Resources Council published reports on water resources in eight major basins looking at water supply, use, and flood and sediment problems.
<b>1957</b>	Iowa Natural Resources Council was given authority from the Legislature to regulate water withdrawal, use, and floodplain development based on a comprehensive plan.
<b>1965 to 1978</b>	Iowa Geological Survey published a series of Water Atlases for ground and surface water availability versus demand.
<b>1970</b>	Six Conservancy Districts were created with boundaries formed along major drainage basin divides. Later renamed Water Resource Districts, they were given broad powers for watershed planning and construction. These sunsetted in 1988. The lack of taxation powers and resistance from Soil and Water Conservation Districts were cited as leading to their demise.

Date	Event/milestone
<b>1972</b>	Publication of the Upper Mississippi Comprehensive Basin Studies authorized by the 1965 Water Resources Planning Act.
<b>1975 to 1978</b>	A "Water Plan '78 Framework Study" was developed providing recommendations for further planning work. A follow-up report due in 1980 was never prepared.
<b>1983</b>	Iowa Natural Resources Council merged with the Department of Environment Quality to form the Department of Water, Air, and Waste Management. The 1982 legislation called for an emphasis of water needs and floodplain mapping for the next 20 years.
<b>1985</b>	A 1985 State Water Plan was published focusing on water availability as required from 1982 legislation.
<b>1985</b>	Legislation created the Department of Natural Resources by combining the Department of Water, Air, and Waste Management, Iowa Geological Survey, Energy Policy Council and Conservation Commission, and established a groundwater protection strategy.
<b>1986</b>	Floodplain Mapping Plan as required from 1982 legislation was developed.

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<sup>1</sup> Riessen, Jack. "Iowa's Water Planning History." Iowa Department of Natural Resources, 2009, [iowadnr.gov/Portals/indnr/uploads/water/Iowa's\\_Water\\_Planning\\_History.pdf](http://iowadnr.gov/Portals/indnr/uploads/water/Iowa's_Water_Planning_History.pdf). Accessed January 2019.



Date	Event/milestone
<b>1987</b>	The Iowa Groundwater Protection Strategy was published, of which many recommendations were incorporated into the 1987 Groundwater Protection Act.
<b>1996</b>	The 1996 Iowa State Water Plan was published by Iowa State University identifying options for water problems in rural areas.
<b>1998</b>	Iowa Environmental Council publishes its Water Quality Action Plan after a year of stakeholder outreach.
<b>Spring 1999</b>	Iowa Legislature creates Watershed Protection Program.
<b>December 2001</b>	Iowa Watershed Task Force publishes its final report after two years of meetings with stakeholders.
<b>January 2003</b>	Gov. Tom Vilsack declares intention in Condition of the State address to hold a summit on water quality.
<b>November 2003</b>	Iowa Water Summit held and a list of recommendations written prior to legislative session.
<b>Spring 2006</b>	Iowa Legislature calls for creation of Watershed Quality Planning Task Force.
<b>November 2007</b>	Watershed Quality Planning Task Force creates recommendations to Iowa Legislature calling for the creation of the Water Resources Coordinating Council.
<b>2008</b>	Iowa Department of Natural Resources develops recommended nutrient criteria for Iowa's recreational lakes.
<b>June 2008</b>	Record flooding in Cedar Rapids and tornadoes across the state cause \$848 million in damages.
<b>Spring 2009</b>	Iowa Legislature follows recommendations of Watershed Quality Planning Task Force and creates the Water Resources Coordinating Council.
<b>November 2009</b>	Water Resources Coordinating Council publishes a Final Recommendations Report for the Iowa Legislature.
<b>Spring 2010</b>	Watershed Planning Advisory Council and Watershed Management Authorities established through Iowa Legislature.

Date	Event/milestone
<b>March 2011</b>	Environmental Protection Agency publishes memo urging Hypoxia Task Force states to make greater efforts in their nutrient reduction strategies.
<b>2012</b>	Iowa drafts the Nutrient Reduction Strategy asking for public comment.
<b>2013</b>	Iowa Environmental Council files a petition for rulemaking with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to establish numeric nutrient criteria for recreational lakes.
<b>January 2013</b>	Iowa releases its Nutrient Reduction Strategy for the first time.
<b>2015</b>	Survey of Iowa farmers conducted by Iowa State University finds more than 92 percent have knowledge of the Nutrient Reduction Strategy.
<b>September 2017</b>	Iowa, with help from Iowa State University, releases its baseline assessments of nonpoint nitrogen and phosphorus loads from 1980 to 1996.
<b>January 2018</b>	Iowa celebrates the five-year anniversary of the Nutrient Reduction Strategy with release of a progress report.
<b>Spring 2018</b>	The Iowa Legislature passes Senate File 512 which will increase funding for water quality by \$282 million over 12 years.
<b>November 2018</b>	Iowa Environmental Council and Environmental Law and Policy Center again petition the Iowa Department of Natural Resources for rulemaking to establish numeric nutrient criteria for Iowa's recreational lakes.

