

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION[571]

Adopted and Filed

Rulemaking related to docks

The Natural Resource Commission (Commission) hereby amends Chapter 16, “Docks and Other Structures on Public Waters,” Iowa Administrative Code.

Legal Authority for Rulemaking

This rulemaking is adopted under the authority provided in Iowa Code sections 461A.4 and 462A.3.

State or Federal Law Implemented

This rulemaking implements, in whole or in part, Iowa Code sections 461A.4 and 461A.18 and 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 710.

Purpose and Summary

Chapter 16 regulates docks on water bodies open to the public for boating and other recreational activities. It includes a permitting system and rules that seek to balance the needs of dock owners with those of the general public and to reduce conflicts between neighboring dock owners. Among these rules are limitations on enclosing docks and hoists with sides and roofs as well as restrictions on what materials may be used for such purposes. 2025 Iowa Acts, House File 710, created a new Iowa Code section that allows for a person with a Class I or III dock permit to construct a roof over a slip or hoist, subject to a number of requirements including material requirements, size limits, limits on what structures may be enclosed, a prohibition on habitation, and an insurance requirement. These new provisions of the Iowa Code supersede existing Chapter 16 provisions. As such, this rulemaking is necessary in order to bring the relevant Chapter 16 provisions into harmony with the Iowa Code.

Public Comment and Changes to Rulemaking

Notice of Intended Action for this rulemaking was published in the Iowa Administrative Bulletin on January 7, 2026, as **ARC 9889C**. A public hearing was held on the following date(s):

- January 28, 2026
- February 3, 2026

No one attended the public hearings. No public comments were received. No changes from the Notice have been made.

Adoption of Rulemaking

This rulemaking was adopted by the Commission on April 9, 2026.

Fiscal Impact

This rulemaking has no fiscal impact to the State of Iowa.

Jobs Impact

After analysis and review of this rulemaking, no impact on jobs has been found.

Waivers

This rulemaking is subject to the waiver provisions of 571—Chapter 11. Any person who believes that the application of the discretionary provisions of this rulemaking would result in hardship or injustice to that person may petition the Commission for a waiver of the discretionary provisions, if any.

Review by Administrative Rules Review Committee

The Administrative Rules Review Committee, a bipartisan legislative committee which oversees rulemaking by executive branch agencies, may, on its own motion or on written request by any individual or group, review this rulemaking at its [regular monthly meeting](#) or at a special meeting. The Committee's meetings are open to the public, and interested persons may be heard as provided in Iowa Code section 17A.8(6).

Effective Date

This rulemaking will become effective on June 17, 2026.

The following rulemaking action is adopted:

ITEM 1. Amend subrule 16.3(7) as follows:

16.3(7) ~~*No enclosure*~~ *Enclosure of private docks.* ~~Private docks and docks in dock management areas shall not be enclosed by roofs or sides. Hoists may be enclosed by roofs and sides constructed of soft-sided natural fiber or synthetic fiber materials for the purpose of protecting watercraft.~~

a. Class I and Class III docks. Hoists may be enclosed by roofs and sides constructed of soft-sided natural fiber or synthetic fiber materials for the purpose of protecting watercraft, or by a roof constructed pursuant to Iowa Code section 462A.27B.

b. Class II, Class IV, and dock management area docks. Docks, hoists and slips shall not be enclosed unless authorized by the relevant dock or slip permit. Authorization may be restricted as needed to minimize adverse visual impact on owners of other property and the public or to ensure public safety, navigation, and access as appropriate.

ITEM 2. Rescind subrule **16.7(5)**.

ITEM 3. Renumber subrule **16.7(6)** as **16.7(5)**.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: For replacement pages for IAC, see IAC Supplement 5/13/26.