

CHAPTER 455J

ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

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455J.1 Environmental management systems — legislative findings — purpose.

1. The purpose of [this chapter](#) is to encourage responsible environmental management and solid waste disposal and to enhance efforts to promote environmental stewardship.
2. The general assembly finds and declares all of the following:
 - a. The policy of responsible environmental management can be furthered by rewarding solid waste disposal projects that operate in an innovative, cost-effective, technologically advanced, and environmentally sensitive manner.
 - b. Responsible environmental management can also be furthered by changing the focus of solid waste disposal projects from disposal management to environmental resource management.
 - c. The concept of environmental stewardship embraces every aspect of the environmental footprint created by the management and disposal of solid waste.
 - d. Environmental management systems mitigate the climate change impacts of solid waste disposal by reducing the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere. In addition, environmental management systems improve water quality by limiting and treating the impacts of leachate disposal and by providing positive examples of sustainable water resource management.
 - e. The goal of managing resources in a sustainable manner is to increase the benefits to communities and society for the present and for the future.

[2008 Acts, ch 1109, §4](#)

Referred to in [§455J.7](#)

455J.2 Definitions.

For purposes of [this chapter](#):

1. “*Commission*” means the environmental protection commission.
2. “*Council*” means the solid waste alternatives program advisory council established by the director.
3. “*Department*” means the department of natural resources.
4. “*Director*” means the director of the department of natural resources.
5. “*Environmental management system*” or “*system*” means a solid waste planning area which has been designated as an environmental management system pursuant to [section 455J.7](#). “*Environmental management system*” includes a planning area designated as an environmental management system that is providing multiple environmental services in addition to solid waste disposal and that is planning for the continuous improvement of solid waste management by appropriately and aggressively mitigating the environmental impacts of solid waste disposal.

[2008 Acts, ch 1109, §5](#)

455J.3 Environmental management system designation requirements.

To qualify for designation as an environmental management system pursuant to [section 455J.7](#), a solid waste planning area shall actively pursue all of the following:

1. *Yard waste management.* Provide for the operation of a yard waste management program or contract with another party to do so.
2. *Hazardous household waste collection.* Provide for the proper management and disposal of hazardous household waste by operating a regional collection center or

participating in a regional collection center network. The regional collection center shall provide for the collection and disposal of hazardous household wastes, including but not limited to paint, pesticides, batteries, automotive products, sharps, needles and syringes, and pool chemicals. The regional collection center shall encourage the reuse of any materials for which reuse is possible and may educate households on the use of safer alternatives through efforts designed to increase public participation and to increase the participation of local government entities not currently in a network. Regional collection centers may also provide for the assessment of current educational programs by examining changes in consumer behavior.

3. *Water quality improvement.* Provide for a water quality improvement program within the system's planning area. Such a program may include offering educational programs, sponsoring awareness initiatives, providing for cleanup activities such as the cleanup of illegal dumping areas, and otherwise promoting responsible environmental behavior.

4. *Greenhouse gas reduction.* Implement a greenhouse gas reduction program designed to prevent the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Such a program may include but is not limited to the following activities:

a. Generating electricity or producing other fuels through the collection of landfill gas, such as a methane gas recovery or minimization system.

b. Collecting and managing food and other organic waste from households and from industrial and commercial establishments, or attempting to recover energy from the reuse of biomass.

c. Implementing programs that encourage the efficient use of energy and promote the use of renewable fuels.

d. Discouraging the uncontrolled burning of solid waste and yard waste.

e. Setting recycling goals to measure energy savings and quantify the level of success of greenhouse gas mitigation efforts.

f. Collection and recycling services targeted at waste generated by industrial and commercial facilities such as cardboard, paper, construction, and demolition waste.

5. *Recycling services.*

a. Offer recycling services for paper, glass, metal, and plastics within the communities served. In addition to offering recycling of paper, metal, glass, and plastics, a solid waste planning area may also offer recycling services for electronic waste, white goods, and tires.

b. Recycling services may also be targeted at waste generated by industrial and commercial facilities such as cardboard, paper, construction, and demolition waste.

c. Recycling services offered in an effort to meet the goals of [this subsection](#) may be provided through drop-off sites or through curbside recycling programs operated in conjunction with solid waste collection.

6. *Environmental education.* Plan and implement programs educating the public on environmental stewardship. These programs may include components designed to prevent illegal dumping, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve water quality, reduce waste generation, increase recycling and reuse, or any other environmental objective that furthers the purpose and goals of [this chapter](#).

[2008 Acts, ch 1109, §6](#)

Referred to in [§455E.11](#), [§455J.4](#), [§455J.7](#)

455J.4 Annual compliance reports.

1. On September 1, 2009, and each year thereafter, each environmental management system shall submit to the department an annual report. The report shall document the system's compliance with the requirements of [section 455J.3](#).

2. The department shall adopt by rule methods and criteria for determining whether a system is in compliance with the provisions of [this chapter](#). In adopting methods and criteria, the department shall consult with stakeholders in order to develop reasonable and appropriate criteria. In determining whether a system is in compliance with the provisions of [this chapter](#), the department shall evaluate whether a system is making continuing progress in regard to the requirements of [section 455J.3](#).

[2008 Acts, ch 1109, §7](#)

455J.5 Incentives.

1. A solid waste planning area designated as an environmental management system pursuant to [section 455J.7](#) shall qualify for all of the following:
 - a. An exemption from solid waste reduction goals imposed on sanitary landfills pursuant to [section 455D.3](#).
 - b. A reduced tonnage fee of three dollars and sixty-five cents per ton, to be imposed as provided in [section 455B.310](#), notwithstanding [section 455B.310, subsection 2](#), of which two dollars and ten cents shall be remitted to the department.
 - c. Financial assistance as recommended by the council and approved by the commission pursuant to [section 455J.7](#).
2. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, in addition to the incentives in [subsection 1](#), an environmental management system is only required to file its updated comprehensive plan once every five years.

[2008 Acts, ch 1109, §8](#)

Referred to in [§455B.310](#)

455J.6 Solid waste alternatives program advisory council.

1. A solid waste alternatives program advisory council is established within the department. The council consists of the following voting members serving staggered three-year terms who shall be appointed by the director:
 - a. One member representing the Iowa recycling association.
 - b. One member representing the Iowa waste exchange.
 - c. One member representing the economic development authority's recycle Iowa program.
 - d. One member representing the Iowa society of solid waste administrators.
 - e. Three members representing solid waste planning areas of various sizes.
 - f. One member representing the Iowa chapter of the national solid wastes management association.
 - g. One member representing the department.
2. In appointing members to the council, the director shall include representatives from both public and private solid waste entities.
3. Members shall not be entitled to compensation, but shall be entitled to reimbursement for expenses pursuant to [section 7E.6](#).
4. A majority of voting members shall not include any member who has a conflict of interest. A statement by a member that the member has a conflict of interest is conclusive for this purpose. A vacancy in the membership does not prevent the council from performing the duties of the council.

[2008 Acts, ch 1109, §9; 2011 Acts, ch 34, §105; 2011 Acts, ch 118, §85, 89](#)

455J.7 Designation of environmental management systems.

1. *Consideration of plans.* The council shall consider solid waste management plans submitted by solid waste planning areas and make recommendations for designation as an environmental management system to the commission. All system designations recommended by the council are subject to approval by the commission. Any solid waste planning area may submit a plan to the council and seek designation as a system.
 - a. By October 1, 2008, the council shall recommend the designation of up to six initial qualifying solid waste planning areas as environmental management systems to serve as pilot projects. By October 1, 2009, and by the same date each year thereafter, the council may recommend the designation of any additional planning areas as systems, provided those areas meet the requirements of [section 455J.3](#).
 - b. In recommending the designation of a planning area as a system, the council shall make a determination as to whether the area meets the requirements of [section 455J.3](#). The council shall not recommend the designation of a planning area as a system unless the planning area meets the requirements of [section 455J.3](#).
 - c. The commission shall consider the plans submitted to the council and shall review the

council's recommendations on those plans. The commission shall approve or reject each plan and shall make publicly available its reasons for doing so.

2. *System review.*

a. By October 1, 2009, and by the same date each year thereafter, the council shall review the annual reports of all designated systems and determine whether those systems remain in compliance with [section 455J.3](#). If the council determines that a planning area is no longer in compliance, the council may recommend to the commission the revocation of the planning area's system designation.

b. The council may review and monitor the progress of those planning areas that have not been designated as a system and shall coordinate with other statewide boards, task forces, and other entities in order to achieve the goals and objectives of [this chapter](#).

3. *Allocation of funds.*

a. The council shall recommend to the commission a reasonable allocation of the moneys provided in [section 455E.11, subsection 2](#), paragraph "a", subparagraph (1), subparagraph division (d), to eligible systems. In making its recommendation as to the allocation of moneys, the council shall adopt and use a set of reasonable criteria. The criteria shall conform to the goals and purposes of [this chapter](#) as described in [section 455J.1](#) and shall be approved by the commission.

b. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, the commission shall make a final allocation of the funds described in [section 455E.11, subsection 2](#), paragraph "a", subparagraph (1), subparagraph division (d), to systems meeting the requirements of [this chapter](#).

c. Moneys allocated pursuant to [this subsection](#) shall be used by systems to further compliance with any of the requirements of [section 455J.3](#).

2008 Acts, ch 1109, §10; 2009 Acts, ch 41, §263

Referred to in [§455D.3](#), [§455E.11](#), [§455J.2](#), [§455J.3](#), [§455J.5](#)