

455B.183 Written permits required.

1. It is unlawful to carry on any of the following activities without first securing a written permit from the director, or from a city or county public works department if the public works department reviews the activity under [this section](#), as required by the department:

a. The construction, installation, or modification of any disposal system or public water supply system or part thereof or any extension or addition thereto except those sewer extensions and water supply distribution system extensions that are subject to review and approval by a city or county public works department pursuant to [this section](#), the use or disposal of sewage sludge, and private sewage disposal systems. Unless federal law or regulation requires the review and approval of plans and specifications, a permit shall be issued for the construction, installation, or modification of a public water supply system or part of a system if a qualified, licensed engineer certifies to the department that the plans for the system or part of the system meet the requirements of state and federal law or regulations. The permit shall state that approval is based only upon the engineer's certification that the system's design meets the requirements of all applicable state and federal laws and regulations and the review of the department shall be advisory.

b. The construction or use of any new point source for the discharge of any pollutant into any water of the state.

c. The operation of any waste disposal system or public water supply system or any part of or extension or addition to the system. This paragraph does not apply to a pretreatment system, the effluent of which is to be discharged directly to another disposal system for final treatment and disposal; a semipublic sewage disposal system, the construction of which has been approved by the department and that does not discharge into a water of the state; or a private sewage disposal system that does not discharge into a water of the state. The commission may adopt additional exemptions for a class of disposal systems that do not discharge into a water of the state or the director may waive the permit requirement for an individual system that does not discharge into a water of the state. The commission or director shall consider the volume, location, frequency, and nature of disposal from a system or class of systems before granting a waiver or exemption. Sludge from a semipublic or private sewage disposal system shall be disposed of in accordance with the rules adopted by the department pursuant to [chapter 17A](#).

2. Upon adoption of standards by the commission pursuant to [section 455B.173, subsections 5 through 8](#), plans and specifications for sewer extensions and water supply distribution system extensions covered by [this section](#) shall be submitted to the city or county public works department for approval if the local public works department employs or retains a qualified, licensed engineer who reviews the plans and specifications using the specific state standards known as the Iowa standards for sewer systems and the Iowa standards for water supply distribution systems that have been formulated and adopted by the commission pursuant to [section 455B.173, subsections 5 through 8](#). The local agency shall issue a written permit to construct if all of the following apply:

a. The submitted plans and specifications are in substantial compliance with departmental rules and the Iowa standards for sewer systems and the Iowa standards for water supply distribution systems.

b. The extensions primarily serve residential consumers and will not result in an increase greater than five percent of the capacity of the treatment works or serve more than two hundred fifty dwelling units or, in the case of an extension to a water supply distribution system, the extension will have a capacity of less than five percent of the system or will serve fewer than two hundred fifty dwelling units.

c. The proposed sewer extension will not exceed the capacity of any treatment works which received a state or federal monetary grant after 1972.

d. The proposed water supply distribution system extension will not exceed the production capacity of any public water supply system constructed after 1972.

3. After issuing a permit, the city or county public works department shall notify the director of such issuance by forwarding a copy of the permit to the director. In addition, the local agency shall submit quarterly reports to the director including such information as capacity of local treatment plants and production capacity of public water supply systems as

well as other necessary information requested by the director for the purpose of implementing [this chapter](#).

4. Plans and specifications for all other waste disposal systems and public water supply systems, including sewer extensions and water supply distribution system extensions not reviewed by a city or county public works department under [this section](#), shall be submitted to the department before a written permit may be issued. Plans and specifications for public water supply systems and water supply distribution system extensions must be certified by a licensed engineer as provided in [subsection 1](#), paragraph “a”. The construction of any such waste disposal system or public water supply system shall be in accordance with standards formulated and adopted by the commission pursuant to [section 455B.173](#), [subsections 5 through 8](#). If it is necessary or desirable to make material changes in the plans or specifications, revised plans or specifications together with reasons for the proposed changes must be submitted to the department for a supplemental written permit. The revised plans and specifications for a public water supply system must be certified by a licensed engineer as provided in [subsection 1](#), paragraph “a”.

5. Prior to the adoption of statewide standards, the department may delegate the authority to review plans and specifications to those governmental subdivisions if in addition to compliance with [subsection 1](#), paragraph “c”, the governmental subdivisions agree to comply with all state and federal regulations and submit plans for the review of plans and specifications including a complete set of local standard specifications for such improvements.

6. The director may suspend or revoke delegation of review and permit authority after notice and hearing as set forth in [chapter 17A](#) if the director determines that a city or county public works department has approved extensions which do not comply with design criteria, which exceed the capacity of waste treatment plants or the production capacity of public water supply systems, or which otherwise violate state or federal requirements.

7. The department shall exempt any public water supply system from any requirement respecting a maximum contaminant level or any treatment technique requirement of an applicable national drinking water regulation if these regulations apply to contaminants which the department determines are harmless or beneficial to the health of consumers and if the owner of a public water supply system determines that funds are not reasonably available to provide for controlling amounts of those contaminants which are harmless or beneficial to the health of consumers.

8. The department may enter into an agreement with a county to delegate to the county the duties of the department under [this section](#) as they relate to the construction of semipublic sewage disposal systems.

9. A rural water association organized under [chapter 357A](#) or [chapter 504](#) that employs or retains a licensed engineer shall be considered to have met the permitting requirements of [this section](#) for the purposes of sewer extensions and water supply distribution system extensions. The department shall not disqualify a rural water system if the system’s hydraulic modeling complies with standards for water supply distribution systems adopted by the commission pursuant to [this chapter](#).

[C66, 71, §455B.25; C73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §455B.45; [82 Acts, ch 1199, §11, 96](#)]

C83, §455B.183

[83 Acts, ch 137, §6](#); [84 Acts, ch 1099, §1](#); [84 Acts, ch 1121, §4](#); [86 Acts, ch 1245, §1899, 1899B](#); [97 Acts, ch 4, §6](#); [97 Acts, ch 137, §5, 6](#); [2003 Acts, ch 44, §67](#); [2007 Acts, ch 126, §75 – 77](#); [2011 Acts, ch 97, §4](#); [2016 Acts, ch 1011, §77](#); [2017 Acts, ch 29, §126](#); [2019 Acts, ch 97, §4, 10](#); [2020 Acts, ch 1032, §1, 2](#); [2021 Acts, ch 80, §282](#)

Referred to in [§331.382](#), [455B.172](#), [455B.174](#), [455B.175](#), [455B.183A](#), [455B.191](#), [459.320](#)