

CHAPTER 116
JUNKYARD CONTROL

[Prior to 6/3/87, Transportation Department[820]—(06,F)Ch 7]

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 2/12/30

761—116.1(306C) Definitions. The definitions in Iowa Code section 306C.1 apply to this chapter. In addition:

“Adjacent area” means an area that is contiguous to and within 1,000 feet of the nearest edge of the right-of-way of any highway on the national highway system.

“Automobile graveyard,” as used in Iowa Code section 306C.1, means any site that is maintained, used, or operated for storing, keeping, buying, or selling ten or more wrecked, scrapped, ruined, dismantled or inoperative motor vehicles, but does not include any location where motor vehicle bodies are placed along stream banks for purposes of bank stabilization and soil erosion control, if such placement conforms with guidelines established by the department of natural resources.

“Industrial activities” means activities that are generally permitted only in industrial or heavier zone classifications by zoning authorities within the state, except that none of the following are considered to be industrial activities:

1. Outdoor advertising structures.
2. Agricultural, forestry, ranching, grazing, farming and related activities, including but not limited to wayside fresh produce stands.
3. Activities normally and regularly in operation less than three months of the year.
4. Transient or temporary activities.
5. Activities not visible from the main traveled way.
6. Activities more than 300 feet from the nearest edge of the main traveled way within the corporate limits of cities.
7. Activities more than 1,000 feet from the nearest edge of the main traveled way outside the corporate limits of cities.
8. Activities conducted in a building principally used as a residence.
9. Railroad tracks, minor sidings, and passenger depots.
10. Junkyards.

“Industrial zone” means a zone established by zoning authorities as being most appropriate for industry or manufacturing. A zone that simply permits certain industrial activities as an incident to the primary land use designation is not considered to be an industrial zone.

“Inoperative motor vehicle” means any of the following:

1. A motor vehicle that does not have a valid title.
2. A motor vehicle that does not have a current registration unless the motor vehicle is in the inventory of a motor vehicle dealer licensed under Iowa Code chapter 322.
3. A motor vehicle with one or more of the following items missing or in need of substantial repair: windshield, driver’s seat, steering wheel or steering system, battery, ignition system, fuel tank or fuel supply system, engine, transmission, drive shaft, differential, axle, suspension system, brake system, or frame.
4. A motor vehicle that is not immediately capable of legal operation on a public road or street.

However, any one of the following by itself does not render a motor vehicle inoperative: a battery that can be recharged, one tire and wheel missing or in need of repair, or lack of fuel.

“Main traveled way” means the portion of the roadway for movement of vehicles on which through traffic is carried, exclusive of shoulders and auxiliary lanes. In the case of a divided highway, the main traveled way includes each of the separated roadways for traffic moving in opposite directions, exclusive of shoulders, auxiliary lanes, frontage roads, turning roadways, and parking areas.

“Nonconforming junkyard” means a junkyard located in an area not exempted by Iowa Code section 306C.2 and that was lawfully established:

1. Prior to July 1, 1972, and is located within the adjacent area of an interstate highway.

2. Prior to May 6, 2015, and is located within the adjacent area of a noninterstate highway on the national highway system.
3. Prior to the effective date of a zoning change that caused nonconformity with these rules.
4. Prior to the departure or closure of an industrial activity that caused nonconformity with these rules.
5. Prior to the establishment of a highway as part of the national highway system.

“*Right-of-way*” means land area dedicated to public use for the highway and its maintenance, and includes land acquired in fee simple or by permanent easement for highway purposes but does not include temporary easements or rights for supplementary highway appurtenances.

“*Unzoned industrial area*,” as used in Iowa Code sections 306C.2 and 306C.3, means land occupied by a regularly used building, parking lot, storage area or processing area of an industrial activity, and land within 1,000 feet thereof that is:

1. Located on the same side of the highway as the activity,
2. Not predominantly used for residential or commercial purposes, and
3. Not zoned by state or local law, regulation, or ordinance.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 306C.1 through 306C.9 and 23 U.S.C. Section 136 as implemented through 23 CFR 751.

[ARC 8783C, IAB 1/8/25, effective 2/12/25]

761—116.2(306C) Screening or removal costs. Screening or removal shall be paid for and provided by the following:

116.2(1) The department, only for nonconforming junkyards and subject to Iowa Code sections 306C.3 and 306C.5.

116.2(2) The owner, for junkyards established within the adjacent area of a highway on the national highway system in an area not exempted by Iowa Code section 306C.2, or for nonconforming junkyards that have expanded in size since becoming nonconforming.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 306C.3 and 306C.5.

[ARC 8783C, IAB 1/8/25, effective 2/12/25]

761—116.3(306C) Screening standards.

116.3(1) *Composition.* Screens may be natural or manmade, but all screens shall be of a height and type to provide year-round obscurement of the contents.

a. Natural screens may consist of nondeciduous plantings, provided the variety, size, and growth rate will obscure the site within a reasonable time period. Earthen berms or existing natural features on the site may also be incorporated into the screening solution.

b. Manmade screens may consist of any variety of materials, provided the screen is constructed in a sturdy, permanent manner and blends with the natural surroundings. Buildings may be incorporated into the screening solution, but inoperative motor vehicles may not be stacked or arranged as a component of the screening feature.

116.3(2) *Screening plan.* For junkyards that are not exempted by Iowa Code section 306C.2, a screening plan should be submitted to the department for review before investing in plants, materials, and labor. This allows for the department to review the plan to ensure that the proposed screen will completely obscure the contents of the site from view, will be structurally sound, and will blend in with the natural surroundings for the area. While submitting a screening plan is not required, doing so adds confidence that investments made will yield the desired result.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 306C.3 and 306C.4 and 23 U.S.C. Section 136 as implemented through 23 CFR 751.

[ARC 8783C, IAB 1/8/25, effective 2/12/25]

761—116.4(306C) Removal. Removal or relocation of contents to areas not viewable from the highway may be necessary for the following reasons:

116.4(1) The difference in elevation between the highway and junkyard is such that a screen tall enough to completely obscure the site is not cost-effective.

116.4(2) The owner is financially unwilling or otherwise unable to complete the installation of or maintain a screen that can pass review by the department.

116.4(3) Local regulations do not permit the construction of screening of such type that would provide complete obscurement.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 306C.2, 306C.3 and 306C.5.

[ARC 8783C, IAB 1/8/25, effective 2/12/25]

761—116.5(306C) Notice and enforcement.

116.5(1) Notice. The department may provide a 30-day written notice by certified mail to the owner of a junkyard and, if not the same person or entity, the owner of the property, demanding that steps be taken to bring a site into compliance. Steps may include but are not limited to the submission of a screening plan, completion of a screen, and extending or repairing a screen.

116.5(2) Enforcement. If the junkyard remains out of compliance after notice is served and steps toward compliance are not accomplished within the time frames prescribed by the department, the department may apply for an injunction to abate the public nuisance as provided in Iowa Code section 306C.6.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 306C.4 and 306C.6.

[ARC 8783C, IAB 1/8/25, effective 2/12/25]

761—116.6(17A) Hearings and appeals. A person who is aggrieved by a decision of the department and who is entitled to a hearing may contest the decision pursuant to 761—Chapter 2506.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code chapter 17A.

[ARC 8783C, IAB 1/8/25, effective 2/12/25; Editorial change: IAC Supplement 6/24/26]

761—116.7(306C) Contact information. Inquiries regarding this chapter may be directed to the Advertising Management Section, Traffic and Safety Bureau, Department of Transportation, 800 Lincoln Way, Ames, Iowa 50010; telephone 515.239.1255.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 306C.1 through 306C.9.

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