

January 15, 2008

Dear Members of the Iowa Assembly:

The Iowa Department of Economic Development (IDED) is pleased to report on the provision of on-going efforts to coordinate regulatory assistance for the state of Iowa. This report fulfills the following provision of Iowa Code, Chapter 15E.19:

“By January 15 of each year, the Department of Economic Development shall submit a written report to the General Assembly regarding the provision of regulatory assistance by the state agencies, including the Department’s efforts, and its recommendations and proposed solutions to streamline the process of issuing permits to business.”

Iowa Code, Chapter 15E.19 also directs IDED to coordinate regulatory assistance for the state of Iowa. Each agency responsible for programs that regulate business is required to establish a “Business Assistance Coordinator” within the office of the agency director or the agency’s administrative division to work with IDED and:

- Serve as the regulatory agency’s primary contact for regulatory affairs with IDED
- Provide information on regulatory requirements to businesses and represent the regulatory agency to the private sector
- Monitor permit applications and provide timely permit status information to IDED
- Require that regulatory agency staff participate in negotiations and discussions with businesses, and
- Notify IDED of proposed rulemaking activities and any changes to a regulatory program.

Iowa Business and Regulatory Assistance Network

IDED provides a focal and confidential point of contact enabling citizens, entrepreneurs, small business, industry and communities with access and communication with regulatory agencies. Working with business assistance coordinators the IDED has established the Iowa Business and Regulatory Assistance Network providing efficient and timely response to inquiries about regulatory issues and resources of assistance by state government.

Designating a business assistance coordinator in each regulatory agency ensures assistance is timely and supports efforts for streamlining processes crossing multiple agencies. Results include:

- Reducing the regulatory burden on individuals and businesses by providing a focal point of contact to help identify compliance requirements and “expert” agency contacts and resources.
- Guiding economic development projects through applicable regulatory processes using a coordinated process that provides pre-application consultation and assistance from project start to completion.

- Responding to inquiries originating with IDEED (that require assistance by other agencies) typically within one business day.
- Sponsoring the statewide Iowa Environmental Regulatory Assistance “Construction and Demolition Works” coordinated by the Small Business Environmental Liaison to help small business identify compliance requirements and integrate sustainable business practices.
- Supporting the Water Quality Advocacy Program which provides confidential, non-regulatory assistance with water quality issues, including sponsoring wastewater treatment workshops so operators and owners can better understand permit requirements and submit timely and complete permit renewals.
- Improving the Business License Information Center website with IowAccess Advisory Council support to ensure the business user and entrepreneur can 24/7 accurately and quickly identify business compliance requirements and resources across the state government enterprise, successfully navigate and link to regulatory agency web sites.
- Providing an online toolkit of fact sheets with information on frequently requested compliance topics including: “Structuring Your New Business,” “Site Development and Expansion,” and compliance assistance for specific sectors such as for the renewable fuels industry.

Coordination between IDEED and regulatory agencies sends a positive message concerning Iowa’s competitive business climate and the ability of Iowa state government to act as an effective business partner.

Sincerely,



Michael Tramontina
Director