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The Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities Applauds the Environmental Protection Commission in Making Crucial Update to Antidegradation Standards

AUGUST 10, 2016 (Des Moines) – Today, the Environmental Protection Commission (EPC) met to adopt proposed changes to Iowa’s current antidegradation standards. The EPC approved the revision unanimously.

“We are pleased with the decision the EPC made today,” said Timothy Whipple, general counsel for the Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities (IAMU). “Accepting this crucial revision to the current antidegradation standards ensures that municipal utilities can continue to provide quality service to consumers and make responsible spending decisions to best serve their communities.”

The changes come after the City of Clarion was named in a lawsuit brought forward by the Iowa Environmental Council and the Environmental Law and Policy Center earlier this year. It was made clear in the process that the ambiguous standards that were in place could result in financial hardship for rural utilities facing heightened scrutiny.

“Iowa’s antidegradation standards were last updated in 2010,” said Whipple. “They were simply too ambiguous, which made it hard for many municipal utilities to ensure compliance. We applaud the DNR and EPC for making this change.”

The change to Iowa’s antidegradation policy is minimal and aimed at providing clarity, not lowering standards. The 115 percent threshold now in place will ensure that municipal utilities have the opportunity to implement cost-effective infrastructure upgrades that allow the community to thrive. The changes to the standards simply optimize the balance between environmental stewardship and fiscal responsibility.

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About Iowa Association Of Municipal Utilities

Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities (IAMU) represents more than 750 municipal electric, gas, water, storm water, and broadband utilities statewide. Organized in 1947, IAMU represents municipal utility interests before the Iowa Legislature, administers disaster assistance, provides employee trainings, and assists in the formulation and implementation of energy efficiency programs.