

Legislature to Consider Air Quality; Expanded Recycling

The 2010 Legislature will discuss air quality problems and a comprehensive plan to encourage more recycling.

In 2006, the federal government lowered the National Ambient Air Quality Standard within the Clean Air Act for fine particulate matter, commonly referred to as PM 2.5. Several areas of Iowa, predominately in the eastern side of the state, have had PM 2.5 levels exceeding the standard.

PM 2.5 penetrates deep into parts of the lungs that are more vulnerable. Active children and the elderly, as well as individuals with respiratory problems and heart disease, are most at risk to increased levels of PM 2.5.

If an area is found to be in violation of National Ambient Air Quality Standards, the EPA can deem the area in nonattainment. Iowa would then be required to develop a state implementation plan to outline the measures the state will undertake to improve air quality.

Expanded Recycling

The Comprehensive Recycling Task Force made five recommendations to lawmakers for the 2010 session to enhance comprehensive sustainable recycling programs in the state. The task force focused on waste generated by the residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional sectors.

The recommendations include developing and implementing a statewide Green Certification Program, the creation of a Green Advisory Committee, and the development of a Recycling Vendor and Resource Green List.

The task force also suggested creating a communication and education outreach resource program. Finally, it was suggested that the organizations and members of the task force be utilized in moving forward with the recommendations.