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Press Release

For Immediate Release

Great River Regional Waste Authority and West Central Iowa Solid Waste Management Association DNR designated Environmental Management Systems

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The Great River Regional Waste Authority and West Central Iowa Solid Waste Management Association were designated Environmental Management Systems (EMS) by the Environmental Protection Commission on March 18th. They join nine participants in the program and began specialized EMS training provided by the Department of Natural Resources in April 2014.

Iowa's Solid Waste Environmental Management System (EMS) program was established in 2008 Legislation, House File 2570. The EMS program assists participants with operating in a more innovative, cost-effective, technologically advanced, and environmentally sensitive manner. EMS is an alternative to the Comprehensive Planning system required of Iowa's cities and counties, who group together to make up Solid Waste Planning Areas. There are 44 Solid Waste Planning Areas in Iowa.

"EMS is the next step," reports Department of Natural Resources (DNR) program planner Leslie Goldsmith, "while Comprehensive Planning concentrates on landfill diversion, EMS helps participants put a system in place to improve overall environmental performance on a continuous basis." The EMS system concentrates on six component areas including yard waste management; hazardous household waste management; water quality improvement; greenhouse gas reduction; recycling; and environmental education.

New EMS program participants receive training and assistance from DNR staff and a specialized EMS consultant. Legislation provides grant funding to assist in developing the EMS and provides ongoing support to participants. Program participants must undergo an annual Audit and provide annual reports documenting performance and demonstrating continuous improvement through setting environmental goals.

The EMS program is voluntary. Planning Areas interested in the program may apply for designation annually. The contact at the Department of Natural Resources is: Leslie.Goldsmith@dnr.iowa.gov. Phone: 515-281-8499.

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