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New Weather Stations Forecast Flood and Drought Conditions

The Iowa Flood Center's state-of-the-art weather stations provide researchers and landowners with valuable information about hydrologic conditions.

For farmers, weather information is crucial. For instance, they need to know the best time to plant, the best time to apply field applications, and how to plan for changing weather conditions. The Iowa Flood Center's (IFC) new hydrologic stations measure rainfall and wind speed and direction, as well as soil moisture and temperature. They are co-located with a shallow groundwater well, which provides information about the water table. Besides providing vital information for agriculture, sensor data also support IFC activities for the \$97M [Iowa Watershed Approach](#) (IWA) statewide program focused on reducing flood risk in nine watersheds across Iowa.

With funding from the IWA, the IFC will deploy a network of 20 hydrologic stations this year. The new sensors represent an expansion of the IFC's current network of nearly 50 similar rain gauge stations statewide. This growing network of hydrologic stations is helping the IFC reach its goal of 100 stations deployed in Iowa—one in each county. This network will help researchers and stakeholders better predict floods, assess droughts, and manage water resources. In addition, Iowa's agricultural producers can use the information to support their crop management systems and potentially boost yields.

IFC makes this hydrologic data publicly available on the internet. The Iowa Flood Information System (IFIS) online tool provides real-time information on watersheds, precipitation, and stream levels for more than 1,000 Iowa communities. Data collected from the hydrologic stations can be accessed at ifis.iowafloodcenter.org/ifis/app.

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