**Section 700.70 Division of Natural Resources**

a) The Division of Natural Resources is separated into three bureaus:

1) The Bureau of Environmental Programs regularly surveys for infestations of plant pests and plant diseases and establishes quarantines, cooperates with county weed commissioners to institute weed control programs, inspects and licenses nurseries, inspects horticulture to insure plant health and control diseases, and registers economic poisons. The Departments of Agriculture and Public Health, each in its jurisdictional area, license and certify persons in Illinois who handle and apply pesticides. Custom public pesticide applicators are certified and/or licensed, and the pesticide program is administered in accordance with State Federal statutory authority and the Illinois State Plan for Certification of Pesticide Applicators as approved by the Federal Environmental Protection Agency. The Bureau administers the agrichemical facility containment and groundwater program and provides pesticide laboratory services in support of these and other bureau administered programs.

2) The Bureau of Farmland Protection is responsible for administering the State of Illinois' Farmland Protection Program and the Department's Mined Lands Reclamation Program. The Bureau analyzes proposed state capital development projects for compliance with the Farmland Preservation Act (Ill. Rev. Stat. 1989, ch. 5, par. 1301 et seq.) to protect Illinois' finite agricultural land base from unnecessary conversion and degradation. In accordance with the Act, the named ten state agencies were required to adopt agricultural land preservation policies and should plan and implement their projects in a manner which will generate the least amount of adverse impacts upon Illinois' agricultural environment. The Bureau conducts public informational meetings to inform the general public of the importance of farmland protection and provides technical assistance to landowners and local units of government in the formation of farmland protection programs at the local level. Additionally, the Bureau works jointly with the Illinois Department of Mines and Minerals in the implementation of the State's Surface Mine Reclamation Program. Pursuant to an interagency agreement, the Bureau reviews mining permit applications and performs on-site mine inspections to monitor reclamation success. The Bureau assists Mines and Minerals in developing soil restoration standards and formulated the Agricultural Lands Productivity Formula to determine if in fact reclaimed prime farmland has been restored to premining capabilities. The Bureau samples field crops on reclaimed land to ascertain productivity levels for bond release.

3) The Bureau of Soil Conservation has responsibility for all State soil erosion control program activities and provides education, technical and financial assistance to the 98 Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts. The major activities for the State's soil erosion programs involves: coordinating a State Erosion and Sediment Control Program, administering a soil conservation cost-share program, administering grants to Districts for office operations and staff salaries, providing public presentations on benefits of soil conservation, assisting private and public organizations and agencies in the development of soil erosion and water quality programs, working with the United States Soil Conservation Service and various state and federal agencies in developing and implementing effective land treatment programs to protect existing soil and water resources, and representing the State in all matters arising from the provisions of the Soil and Water Conservation Districts Act.

A) Providing assistance to the 98 Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Districts involves: assisting the district directors in carrying out their duties and programs; providing guidance to districts in the management of district personnel; evaluating districts' proposed budgets and special project proposals; providing training sessions and exchanges of ideas between districts; establishing rules and procedures for district referendums and hearings; supervising district director elections; and considering, reviewing, and expressing opinions on any rules, regulations, ordinances, or other actions of district directors.

B) In addition to soil and water conservation programs, the Bureau administers the Water Use Act of 1983, the modern soil survey program, and the Sustainable Agriculture program. The Water Use Act of 1983 authorizes the Department to better manage and, in four counties, restrict groundwater withdrawals. The modern soil survey program is a state, federal and local cost-share program for mapping of all soils of the state by county. The Sustainable Agriculture program encourages practices that result in environmentally safe and profitable agricultural production.

b) Address and phone number of the Division of Natural Resources:

1) Superintendent, Division of Natural Resources, Department of Agriculture, Agriculture Building, State Fairgrounds, Post Office Box 19281, Springfield, 62794-9281; Phone 217/782-6297.

2) Bureau of Environmental Programs; Phone 785-2427.

3) Bureau of Farmland Protection; Phone 782-6297.

4) Bureau of Soil Conservation; Phone 782-6297.

c) Branch Office:

Bureau of Environmental Programs, 1010 Jorie Boulevard, Oak Brook, Illinois 60521; Phone 312/990-8256.

(Source: Amended at 16 Ill. Reg. 3893, effective February 28, 1992)