



Welcome to the **Metro Waste Authority** of Des Moines, IA

Executive Director Position Open - Apply by July 27, 2016



Approximate Population Served: 730,000

“You really ought to give Iowa a try”, is not just a catchy phrase from the musical *The Music Man*, it is how residents feel. Greater Des Moines is a place for everyone to call home and, as they also say, “to seize life experiences, seize healthy living and seize arts and culture.”

Des Moines is a city with world class amenities and many national recognitions. It is the capital of Iowa, the most populous city in the state and the county seat of Polk County. The metro area encompasses over 730,000 residents, yet it still has a small-town feel. People are friendly and neighbors help neighbors. It is a conservative town where the people have Midwestern values, set in a sea of agriculture. Yet it is well known through the world as an insurance and financial services hub. Being in the middle of the country and the middle of the Midwest, it is easy to get anywhere in the country and the world. Chicago, St. Louis, Omaha, Kansas City, Minneapolis and Milwaukee are all within an easy drive. Des Moines International Airport serves as a gateway to the world. It hosts six major airlines and offers over 15 flights a day to seven airline hubs around the country.



Among the many prestigious rankings Greater Des Moines has received in recent years are being named a best in class for business, young professionals and many quality of life amenities. Perhaps the ranking that is most reflective of the region's momentum is Gallup's ranking of Greater Des Moines as the #1 Metro with the Most Community Pride. Said Jay Byers, CEO of the Greater Des Moines Partnership, "Our business, civic and community leaders take pride in being able to make a difference with their leadership, with their time and with their money. Our community is very good at collaborating to act on big ideas and advance momentum in the region."

Des Moines metro area is rated among the top places to live in the country for millennials, for people with children and for retirees. It's where young people return after college, and where residents feel safe and want to raise their families. You can find affordably priced homes on large lots, located on tree-lined streets and where the cost of living is 10% below the national average (Moody's Analytics). The community offers quality schools, superb public services, and friendly neighborhoods. You will feel welcome and find many entertainment opportunities—a vibrant downtown area, popular state fair, premier art center, minor league baseball team and other sports-watching venues. It's a place where "there is always something to do," according to BuzzFeed.com's "34 Underrated U.S. Cities You'll Actually Want to Move To."

Des Moines has something to offer everyone. For college graduates, ages 22 to 35, Des Moines is attractive as a hub of commercial, cultural and political activity. For example, in East Village almost one-third of the population is now under 35 years of age. Unemployment is low – it has the fourth-lowest rate for workers with a bachelor's degree of any city in the country, and is ninth ranked nationally for paying jobs and job availability. Rent prices are more affordable than in larger rival cities. Those are the reasons



SmartAsset ranked Des Moines third on the 2015 list of “The Top 10 Cities for New College Grads.”

Families will appreciate the high quality education their children receive in a great public school system—the high school graduation rate is 94.7%. The area is home to five institutions of higher learning. Known for remarkable value and an exceptional learning environment, Drake University has been an integral part of the community since its founding in 1881. The University ranks 17th in the nation for return on investment (The Economist, 2015), and is consistently among the top 3 universities for their Masters degree programs in the Midwest (US News and World Report).

Families also enjoy more time spent together as result of a short commutes to work—the average is 19.2 minutes from door to door. Access to festivals, markets, local libraries, outdoor recreational opportunities helped place it in Money’s “Top 50 Best Places to Live 2015.”

Foodies will enjoy an outstanding variety of dining options. Or if you enjoy cooking, the Des Moines Downtown Farmers Market has been ranked second in the nation by The Daily Meal.

The city has an amazing skywalk system connecting buildings in its downtown core—you can walk for over four miles without ever going outside! If you prefer trails, the area offers over 600 miles of bicycle and walking trails. If you enjoy Division 1 and Triple-A sports, the Iowa Cubs minor league baseball team helped Des Moines take the third spot in a 2015 list of the best minor league baseball towns. Sports Events Magazine gave the city a top place ranking for watch sports in the country.

Des Moines is also recognized for its commitment to the arts. The Huffington Post named the Des Moines Art Center fifth on its list of free art museums that should be visited, and The Des Moines Civic Center is a destination for world-class performing arts. The venue offers entertainment that appeals to the entire family from live, professional theater direct from Broadway, to concerts, dance and family shows. Ballet Des Moines is central Iowa’s only resident, professional ballet company and provides world-class training and performances. Hoyt Sherman Place, a historic landmark west of downtown, was built

as a private residence in 1877 and has been meticulously restored with a 1,252-seat theater hosting concerts, comedy shows and other productions throughout the year.

Greater Des Moines boasts the Blank Park Zoo and the Science Center of Iowa. It also hosts a growing number of nationally acclaimed cultural events and parades, including the annual Des Moines Arts Festival in June, Metro Arts Jazz in July, Iowa State Fair in August, the World Food & Music Festival in September, and more.

Des Moines is an important city in U.S. presidential politics as Iowa is home to the first event in the presidential caucus/primary cycle. The build-up starts years before the actual event and you’ll feel the political excitement as Greater Des Moines welcomes all the potential presidential candidates, their staffs, the national media and special event attendees. As a 2007 article in The New York Times stated, “if you have any desire to witness presidential candidates in the most close-up and intimate of settings, there is arguably no better place to go than Des Moines”.

Time and again, Greater Des Moines has been recognized as an amazing place to live, work and enjoy! Lest we not miss any, it was ranked #1 as Best City for Young Professionals (Forbes 2014) and the #1 City with an Up-and-Coming Downtown (Fortune 2014). So come, seize Des Moines and find your dream career and lifestyle!

HISTORY

The crossroads of the Des Moines and Raccoon rivers have attracted humans since at least 5000 BC. The area’s recorded history began in 1673 when Father Jacques Marquette and Louis Joliet became the first Europeans to settle in Iowa. In 1803, the area joined the United States as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Westward expansion and settlement began in earnest after the end of the War of 1812 and by 1840, the white settler population of Iowa had grown to 10,000.

Fort Des Moines was constructed in 1843 and Polk County (named after then President James K. Polk) was established in 1846. In 1855 the state capitol was moved here from Iowa City. In 1866, the first railroad was completed connecting Des Moines to Keokuk. In 1867 the first insurance company was organized, and Drake University opened in 1881. In

1884 the first General Assembly session was held in the new capitol building. The Governor’s Office was completed in 1885, and the Supreme Court completed in 1886.

At the turn of the 20th century, Des Moines undertook a "City Beautiful" project where large Beaux Arts public buildings and fountains were constructed along the Des Moines River, forming the Civic Center Historic District. In the 1950s the city began a post-industrial decline which lasted until the late 1980s before the rebound began and the city began transforming into a white-collar professional city. Today Des Moines truly is a city with a future. In fact the area’s population increased by over 20% between 2000 and 2014.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The Greater Des Moines Region includes eight Central Iowa counties—Dallas, Guthrie, Jasper, Madison, Marshall, Polk, Poweshiek, and Warren. See Table 1 for detailed demographic information for the area. The region is poised for 5.1% population growth by 2019.

GEOGRAPHY

The city of Des Moines covers 83 square miles while Polk County covers 592 square miles. Both are situated on rolling terrain in south-central Iowa along the banks of the Des Moines and Raccoon Rivers. They are 850 feet above sea level at the river junction. Good drainage of the river to the southwest produces fertile farmland.

Des Moines is located very near the center of the country, and almost located equally between these nearby major cities: 300 miles west, and 5 hours of driving from Chicago, IL; about 250 miles south and 3.5 hours of driving from Minneapolis, MN; about 200 miles north and 3 hours from Kansas City, MO; and about 150 miles east and just over 2 hours driving from Omaha, NE.

CLIMATE

Located at the center of North America and removed from large bodies of water, the Des Moines area has a humid continental climate. The area experiences hot, humid summers with temperatures often climbing into the 90°F range, occasionally reaching 100°F. Humidity can also

Table 1: De Moines Demographics

2015 Estimated Population: 726,452			
Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
Caucasian	77.7%	0 to 19	27.8%
African American	10.3%	20 to 34	24.0%
Asian	4.7%	35 to 44	15.5%
Some Other Race	3.5%	45 to 64	20.3%
Two or More Races	3.8%	65 and Older	12.4%

Ethnicity		Median Age	
Hispanic-All Races	11.9%	Des Moines	33.6
All Others	88.1%	U.S.	37.4

Educational Achievement (over age 25)	
High School or Higher	87.3%
Bachelor’s Degree or Higher	24.7%

Income	
Median Household Income	\$76,787
Mean Household Income	\$59,128
Percent Below Poverty Level	4.2%

Source: City of Desmoines and the U.S. Census

be high in spring and summer, with frequent afternoon thunderstorms. Fall brings pleasant temperatures and colorful fall foliage. Winters are typically cold and snowy, although it can be bitterly cold from time to time. Snowfall averages 35.3 inches per season, and annual precipitation averages 36.0 inches, peaking in the warmer months.

COMMERCE

Forbes magazine ranked Des Moines as the "Best Place for Business" in both 2010 and 2013. In 2014, NBC ranked Des Moines as the "Wealthiest City in America" according to its criteria. It is a major center of the U.S. insurance

Table 2: Principal Employers

Employer	Function	Employees
Wells Fargo	Financial	14,500
HyVee Food Stores	Retail	7,500
Mercy Hospital Medical Center	Healthcare	7,055
Unity Point Health (Iowa Health System)	Healthcare	6,435
Principal Financial Group	Financial	6,184
Des Moines Public Schools	Education	4,927
Nationwide / Allied Insurance	Insurance	4,282
John Deere Companies	Agriculture	3,089
Dupont Pioneer	Agriculture	3,000
Kum and Go	Retail	1,820

Source: Des Moines 2015 CAFR

industry and was credited as the "number one spot for U.S. insurance companies" in a Business Wire article. It was also named the third largest "insurance capital" of the world.

Other major industries in Des Moines are government, manufacturing, trade, and health care. Iowa's work force, with an 80 percent high school graduation rate, ranks among the top five states in the country. The principal employers in the city are listed in Table II.

The city is the headquarters for the Principal Financial Group, Athene USA Insurance, the Meredith Corporation, Ruan Transportation, EMC Insurance Companies, and Wellmark Blue Cross Blue Shield. Other major corporations such as Wells Fargo, Voya Financial, and Nationwide Mutual Insurance Company have large operations in or near the metro area. In recent years Microsoft, Hewlett Packard and Facebook have established data processing and logistical facilities in the Des Moines area.

The city added more than 700 technology jobs in 2014, an almost 6% increase, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. That's part of the reason Des Moines jumped from fifteenth to seventh this year on SmartAsset.com's "The Top 10 Best American Cities to Work in Tech in 2015." Skilled workers in Greater Des Moines also have a low unemployment rate—only 2.6% of those with bachelor's degrees are unemployed.

THE AUTHORITY

Metro Waste Authority (MWA) was established in 1969 and is an independent government agency responsible for the disposal of solid waste generated in Polk County. It is now a leader worldwide in environmental stewardship and cost-effective waste management.

The Authority is governed by a 17 member board which is composed of representatives from each of the 16 member cities and Polk County. Each city has one vote and for every increment of population over 50,000, a jurisdiction gets an additional vote.

The board members are collegial and work well together. They are engaged, fiscally conservative/prudent and genuinely want what is best for the Authority and the community. They recognize the staff as being extremely capable.

The Board appoints an executive director who oversees the Authority's day-to-day operations. MWA 2016-2017 budget is \$33.5 million. The Authority projects it will receive over 700,000 tons of refuse and that approximately 33% will be commercial, 25% residential, and 21% construction and demolition. The remaining will be spread among yard waste, special waste, etc. The Authority employs a staff of 70. The employees are represented by two unions: International Union of Operating Engineers (Local 234) and Construction and Public Employees Union/Labors' International Union of North America (Local 177).

The Authority's primary facilities are the Metro Park East Landfill, the Metro Park West Landfill, and two transfer stations. All are outstanding facilities and state-of-the-art. MWA also operates a compost facility, a hazardous waste drop off and recycling drop-offs. The east landfill covers about 1,800 acres and will not reach its capacity until well into the 23rd century. It currently has enough land already permitted to receive solid waste through at least 2050. The eastern landfill also produces methane gas and sales generate \$400,000 in revenues annually for the Authority.

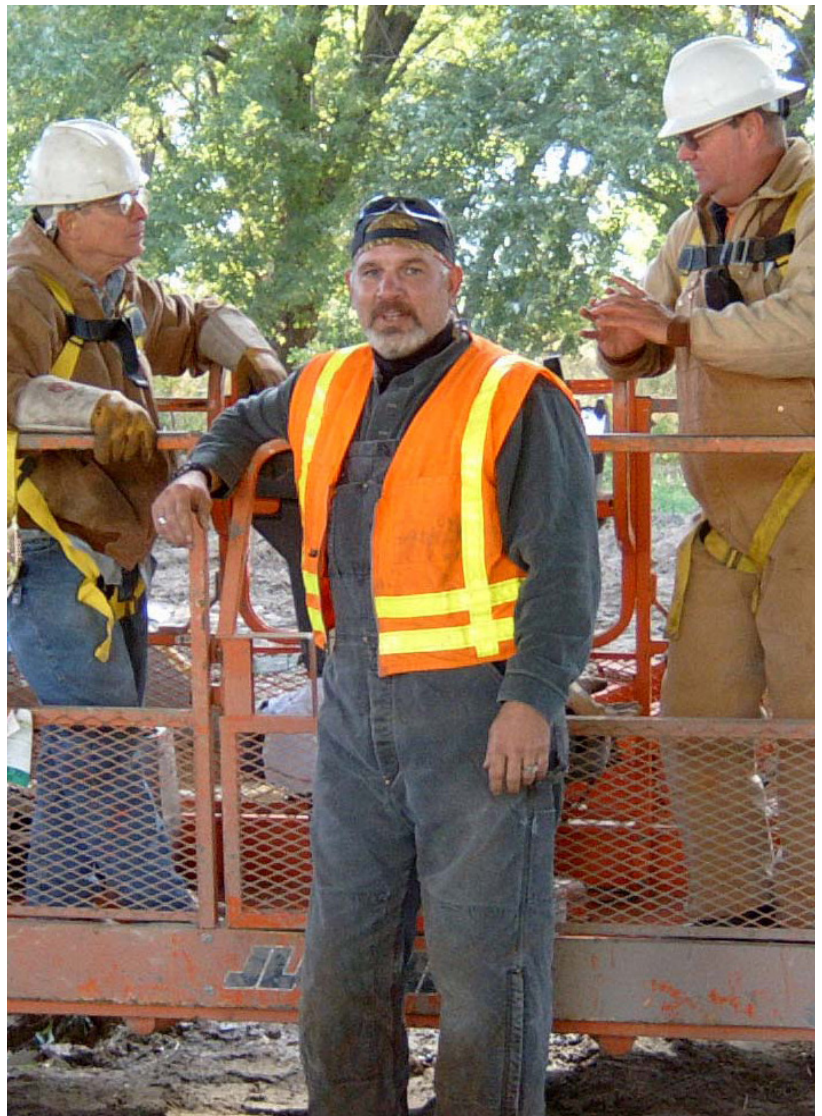
The MWA is recognized worldwide for its vision and best practices. Visitors come from all over to see how Des Moines' MWA does business.

CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

Over the years, the Metro Waste Authority has positioned itself well. Waste is not an area where people can cut back expenses during hard times, so even during the Great Recession, the flow to the landfill and the revenues to MWA were not reduced. The landfills are well operated, do not have odor issues and are not leaching into the rivers or groundwater. Thus, the issues the MWA and the new Executive Director will face are relatively minor compared to many places. First, there is a mild tension between those who want to operate the Authority as a business and those who are more environmentally minded. Second, the Board would like more input into the on going decisions of the new Executive Director. Third, regulation plays an important role in this industry and the Authority is committed to staying ahead of any potential issues. Staying current and compliant is not always easy. Finally, maintaining outstanding communications with the public will be important. The Authority has a very positive story and wants it to be told.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Authority is seeking an Executive Director (ED) who is an outstanding leader and manager. The Board wants someone who will work with it as a partner, a supporter and a trusted advisor. It believes its role is to set policy. When making decisions, the Executive Director will not just try to sell an idea, but provide all the options and the pros and cons in a complete, unbiased and unfiltered way. He/she will strongly believe in transparency, be trustworthy, and work hard to establish credibility with the Board and the public. While the Board firmly believes the ED should run the Authority's day-to-day operations, it does expect to be kept fully



informed. It does not like surprises. The best candidate will be someone who can make the Board Members feel comfortable that their views are being heard and who will help bring them to consensus. He/she will realize that giving the credit to others is often the best way to get things done.

Personally, the individual will be intelligent, upbeat, friendly, outgoing, organized, positive and proactive—someone with a “can do” attitude who is visionary yet practical. He/she will be resolute yet flexible, consistent, cheerfully persistent, high energy, and definitely not a bureaucrat. The individual will have outstanding communications skills and use them to keep everyone—the Board, the staff, the public and the media—informed. The ED will also realize that listening is a very important part of communicating. The individual will be open and honest with no hidden agendas.

The new director needs to be someone who can look over the horizon, anticipate future issues and take action to avoid them. The individual will be environmentally sensitive, a forward thinker, and willing to look at new ideas. He/she will be a true visionary, always seeking the best way to achieve success over the long term. He/she will understand politics and the impact of decisions the Authority may make both on its Board Members and the public. At the same time, he/she will not be politically involved. The goal will be to ensure that no one is put in a difficult situation.

The ideal candidate will be progressive and constantly seeking better ways to do business. These might involve new technologies, improved processes, or better training for staff. The individual will have a mild and friendly Midwestern management style—that is, he/she will be relaxed with high expectations, set lofty but reasonable goals, provide the necessary resources and then step back and expect the staff to get it done! The ED will not be a micro manager but will expect to be kept informed and hold staff accountable. At the same time the ED will value staff’s input and growth. The individual will be a mentor and always seek ways for the MWA staff to soar! A sense of humor will be important as things happen and it is often the best way to diffuse difficult situations.

The new director should have at least a basic knowledge of solid waste but need not be an expert. He/she will have

a staff composed of those who are experts in their fields. It is far more important for the person to be a great leader and manager. Experience in intergovernmental relations and working with boards, city councils, state agencies, and the federal government is important. Expertise in collective bargaining and working with labor unions is also important. A background in science, ecology, or environmental science will be a plus.

This job should be viewed as the capstone to a career and not as a stepping stone. So if you are ready for an amazing place to live and work, a place where you will be able to grow personally and professionally, we invite you to apply to be the MWA’s next Executive Director.

PREVIOUS EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

The Authority has had two directors in the last 18 years. The first left after 16 years to return to city management and the second left after 18 months.

RESIDENCY

Residency within Polk County is not required although we cannot think of a reason to live anywhere else.

COMPENSATION

The salary range for the Executive Director is \$130,000 to \$200,000. Benefits are excellent.

HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your resume and cover letter to Recruit28@cb-asso.com by July 27, 2016. Faxed and mailed resumes will not be considered. Questions should be directed to Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537 or David Collier at (772) 260-1858.

THE PROCESS

Applicants will be screened during August. Finalist interviews are scheduled for September 20th & 21st with a selection shortly thereafter.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Applications will be kept strictly confidential until the finalists are selected. At that point, it is anticipated that the names will be released to the public.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Metro Waste Authority embraces diversity and encourages women and minorities to apply. Other websites of interest are:

<http://www.mwatoday.com/>

<https://www.dmgov.org/InfoCenter/Pages/VisitorInformation.aspx>

<https://www.desmoinesmetro.com>

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