

## COMMISSIONER'S COLUMN

### NHDES receives federal funds for drinking water and wastewater projects

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services recently received approval from the legislative Fiscal Committee and the Governor and Executive Council to accept and expend \$50 million in federal funds from the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) to fund investments in drinking water and wastewater infrastructure.

ARPA is a \$1.9 trillion economic stimulus bill passed by the 117th United States Congress and signed into law by President Biden on March 11, 2021, to speed up the United States' recovery from the economic and health effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the ongoing recession. The Act defines eligible uses of the state and local funding, including responding to a public health emergency, responding to workers performing essential work during the COVID-19 emergency, providing revenue relief to states and making investments in water, sewer and broadband

infrastructure. Based on planning between NHDES, legislative leadership, and the Governor's Office, a portion of the ARPA funds have been initially allocated to NHDES to invest in the drinking water and wastewater infrastructure of New Hampshire.

This initial appropriation will allow NHDES to stand up the program by hopefully having the necessary staff in place to manage it and begin to award grant funding to entities. NHDES is developing a detailed use plan for the ARPA funds based on interim guidance from the US Treasury Department. Some of these funds will be allocated to the Fish and Game Department, to help ensure timely processing of protected threatened



*Commissioner's Column, cont. page 2*

### NHDES Emergency Drought Assistance Team honored

The Environmental Business Council of New England (EBC) awarded the NHDES Emergency Drought Assistance Team with the 2021 EBC Paul G. Keough Environmental-Energy Award for Government Leadership this year for providing emergency relief to New Hampshire's most vulnerable citizens during the extreme drought of 2020.

The team created, secured funding for, advertised, and began administering the Emergency Drought Assistance Program for Low-Income Residential Well Owners within two weeks of the Governor's announcement of the program. The multidisciplinary team included geologists, engineers, environmental scientists, drinking water specialists, accountants, public information specialists and systems analysts from NHDES, and programmers from the state Department of Information Technology.

The program represents the first substantive assistance to residential private well owners in a state where almost 48% of citizens rely on wells for drinking and household water. The program assists these families in achieving resiliency from future droughts with minimal impact on overall groundwater resources in New Hampshire.

Each year, the EBC recognizes companies, organizations, and individuals for outstanding environmental and energy accomplishments in the promotion of a sustainable, clean environment. These awards were established by the EBC to encourage companies, government

*Award, cont. page 3*

**Commissioner's Column** *continued from page 1*

and endangered species consultations for associated permits needed for the projects.

While it is expected that there will be additional ARPA funding allocated for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects, the amount is unknown beyond the \$50 million that has been allocated to this point. NHDES will be standing up outreach efforts to ensure that our stakeholders are in the know once more specific information is available. ■



## Drought conditions update

As the state is kicking off the summer with lower groundwater levels and surface water flows than during more recent droughts, water systems and municipalities should be preparing to message conservation and implement mandatory outdoor water use restrictions earlier than they have in previous years.

NHDES is currently urging water systems to implement outdoor water use

restrictions. Voluntary restrictions are helpful in spreading the conservation message and preparing the public for more stringent restrictions, while implementing mandatory restrictions is prudent in areas experiencing moderate drought, particularly in areas which experience a significant increase in outdoor water use in the summer.



*Reducing non-essential water uses, such as watering your lawn, can help protect your water supply*

### Known Water Use Restrictions

Last Update: 6/24/2021

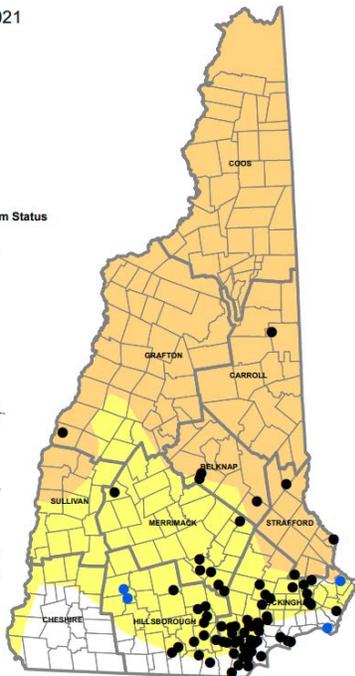
- Legend**
- County Boundary
  - Town Boundary
  - Drought Condition**
    - Abnormally Dry
    - Moderate Drought
    - Severe Drought
    - Extreme Drought
  - Municipality or Water System Status**
    - Voluntary Restriction
    - Mandatory Restriction



0 5 10 20 Miles

Drought Conditions based on United States Drought Monitor (<https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/CurrentMap/StateDroughtMonitor.aspx?NH>)

Disclaimer: The status of water use restrictions is based on information submitted to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and may not be comprehensive.



Residential and other private well owners are encouraged to use water wisely. Giving the well time to replenish by spacing out usage is a good place to start. For example, do laundry several times throughout a week, rather than doing back-to-back loads. Also, in areas of moderate drought, curbing non-essential uses, such as lawn watering and spraying down surfaces that can be swept or hand washed is an effective way to protect your supply.

Currently, 76 water systems have restrictions in place.

Community water systems and municipalities should report restrictions to NHDES for posting on the NHDES website using the electronic reporting form. ■

## ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

*Environmental News* is published six times a year by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services.

Robert R. Scott, **Commissioner**

### Division Directors

Craig Wright, **Air Resources**  
Michael Wimsatt, **Waste Management**

### Environmental News

James Martin, **Editor**  
Kathryn Michener, **Layout**

### Editorial Board

Melinda Bubier	Nina Buckman
Jana Ford	Andrew Fulton
Sherry Godlewski	Susan Lambert
Tracie Sales	

29 Hazen Drive • Concord, NH 03301  
(603) 271-3503 | [www.des.nh.gov](http://www.des.nh.gov)  
[editor@des.nh.gov](mailto:editor@des.nh.gov)

*Printed on recycled paper.*

**Award** *continued from page 1*

agencies, non-profit organizations, and environmental professionals to serve as models for others to emulate and, in doing so, further the mission and objectives of the EBC.

The Paul G. Keough Environmental - Energy Award for Government Service was established by resolution of the Board of Directors on January 4, 1994. The award recognizes the significant contributions Paul Keough made to the environmental and energy industry and is awarded to an organization or individual for outstanding environmental leadership in government service.

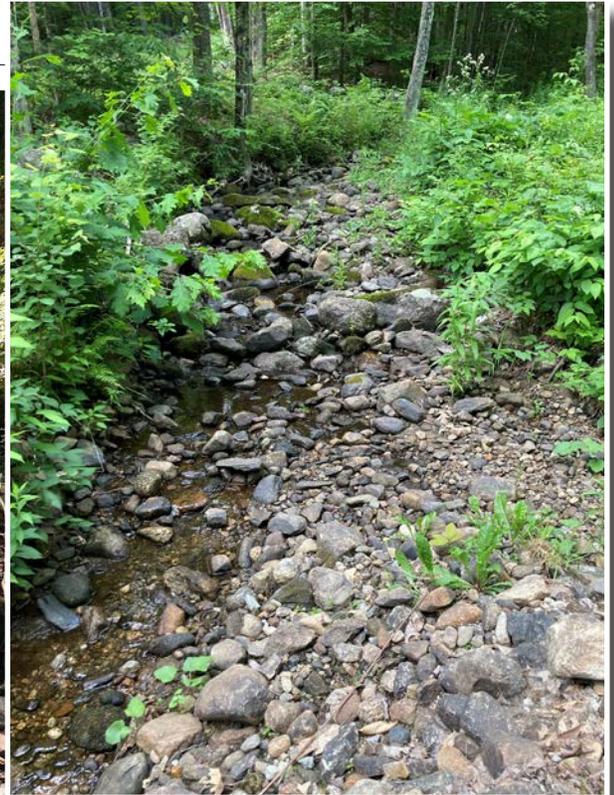
Paul Keough (1946-1994) was one of the first employees hired at the EPA Boston office when it opened in 1971. He served the agency for over twenty years, earning accolades as a hard-nosed, energetic bureaucrat with an abiding com-

mitment to the environment. Mr. Keough began at EPA as the agency's press secretary and spent over 10 years as the deputy administrator for New England. Mr. Keough had an enormous impact on the hundreds of EPA employees he worked within the Region 1 office. He also had a major impact on the thousands of individuals from businesses and industry, New England's many environmental organizations, and other federal, state, and local government officials with whom he came in contact.

The NHDES Emergency Drought Assistance team and its primary collaborators were recently honored at the virtual EBC EBEE Awards Celebration on June 10, 2021. ■



*Black Brook in Manchester, NH*



*Unnamed stream in Wilmot, NH*



## Looking back: popular Deerfield beach restored

As the summer days heat up and people flock to the newly reopened beaches to cool off, it is worth a look back to see how a popular beach in Deerfield was restored after elevated levels of *E. coli* landed it on the Clean Water Act (CWA) impaired waters list.

NHDES water quality monitoring of Pleasant Lake showed exceedances of the *E. coli* bacteria water quality standard. Bacteria from a failed septic system and sediments from chronic erosion were impacting recreation at Veasey Park Beach, a popular summer recreation destination in Deerfield. Two portable toilets were brought in, costing \$1,000 per season to operate, but replacing the conventional septic system would have cost over \$25,000, and posed technical and logistical challenges. Areas of Veasey Park Beach were experiencing significant erosion as well. The Town of Deerfield, with support from other partners, installed composting toilets in the new beach bathhouse and added erosion control practices to redirect and infiltrate runoff. As a result of this work, Veasey Park Beach at Pleasant Lake now meets state water quality standards.

### Story Highlights

Veasey Park, Deerfield's only waterfront town park, is on the west shore of Pleasant Lake. It is a very popular facility during summer months, with lake access for residents and swimming lessons for children. In 2004, two composting toilets were installed at Veasey Park. In such a highly used facility, construction of a well-designed bathhouse with composting toilets was chosen as an environmental alternative to a conventional septic system, offering: (1) a low-impact and cost-effective replacement for the failed septic system at the town park and (2) a demonstrated alternative



septic system installation. The project also served as a demonstration project for the area. Because of the topography, underlying geology, and private property density, there are limited opportunities for community septic systems around the lake; the composting toilets installed at Veasey Park provided an example for lakeshore residents to consider as their septic systems age and require repairs, replacements or upgrades—or as seasonal homes are converted to year-round residences. In addition to the bathhouse, a three-phase project was completed to reduce the amount of stormwater and sediment running off the beach into Pleasant Lake. The first phase reduced stormwater runoff toward the beach from the west by grading a gravel parking lot and installing drainage diverters. The second phase reduced beach erosion and sediment deposition into the lake by grading and installing low-

rise retaining walls to create three perched beach-sand terraces. Existing overland runoff was diverted around the beach into the well-vegetated forest floor where stormwater could infiltrate. The third phase included installing an interceptor main line and lateral drains behind each of the two retaining walls to manage subsurface flows that were causing erosion.

### Results

Since the composting toilet and other best management practices were installed at the Deerfield Town Beach/Veasey Park Beach in 2004, only three exceedances have occurred – out of 120 bacteria samples collected – and were just over the freshwater bacteria standard. These exceedances are

*Beach, cont. page 5*



## New dock registration rules and online registration process

Owners of legally existing non-tidal docking structures in need of repairs or maintenance will have an alternative to obtaining a Wetlands permit to authorize the work. On June 15, NHDES introduced a new voluntary registration process that dock owners can participate in that will allow their structures to be exempted from the usual repair permitting requirements. This new registration process is faster, easier and less expensive (\$200) than the existing Permit-by-Notification, Expedited Minimum or Standard Wetlands permitting processes (\$400).

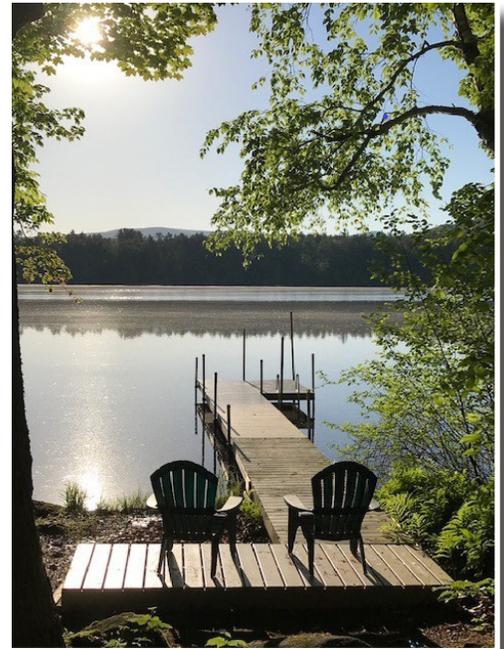
The new registration process can also benefit owners of seasonal structures that do not require repair permits. Often, the owners of seasonal structures lack documentation illustrating that the structures are compliant with RSA 482-A. This can cause delays when buying or selling property while the owner is searching for a historic permit or evidence that the structure was built before 1978. Registration only requires that the structure has existed since January 1, 2000, and registered structures will, by law, be considered to be in compliance with RSA 482-A. Thus registering seasonal structures may reduce delays and facilitate property sales.

Again this new process is only available for legal non-tidal structures, and also cannot be used for residential structures over public waters.

NHDES has developed an online registration process to facilitate and streamline the use of this new option for those

that choose to participate and register their docking structures. Registrations will need to be renewed at the end of their five-year term to remain valid. The renewal process will also be available online.

More detailed information about the adopted interim rules can be found in the following two fact sheets: [New Voluntary Non-Tidal Docking Structures Registration Process \(WB-28\)](#), [Permitting for Private, Non-Commercial Freshwater Docking Structures \(WB-19\)](#). Additionally, a video has been published on the [NHDES YouTube channel](#) to explain the new electronic submission process that has been rolled out in conjunction with the new Dock Registration rules. ■



### **Beach** *continued from page 4*

attributed to wildlife and stormwater runoff rather than direct human sources. Two of the exceedances were gathered after rain events, when many surface waters experience elevated bacteria counts of limited duration – unlike a persistent source of fecal contamination that would occur in both dry and wet weather. As a result, Veasey Park Beach was removed from the CWA impaired waters list in 2014. The removal highlights the success of the project in 2004 that removed the failed septic system, which had been a direct, consistent and concentrated source of E. coli bacteria to the beach and lake.

### **Partners and Funding**

This project relied on cooperation from partners in Deerfield, including the Veasey Park Commission, the town's Conservation Commission, members of the Select Board and Zoning Board, and the Pleasant Lake Preservation Association. EPA and NHDES provided support for the Veasey Park Commission Town Beach Erosion Control Plan and Pleasant Lake Diagnostic Study, which was funded with \$11,000 in CWA section 319 funds and \$6,800 in matching funds. The combined cost of the project was \$85,000, with \$25,000 in CWA section 319 funds and close to \$60,000 in matching funds to complete the work. ■



[twitter.com/NHDES](https://twitter.com/NHDES)



## Collaborative webinars aim to support craft beverage industry

The free, three-part Sustainable Solutions for Craft Beverage Producers Webinar Series – a collaboration between NHDES' Pollution Prevention Program, EPA's Region 1 Pollution Prevention Program and EPA's ENERGY STAR Program – recently concluded with “How to Cultivate a Culture of Sustainability at Your Facility.” This last webinar in the series featured three New England breweries who are leaders in crafting beer and protecting the environment, including New Hampshire's own Nicole Carrier from Throwback Brewery in North Hampton, New Hampshire.

Throwback was chosen to represent New Hampshire for this webinar because of its commitment to building a sustainable, community-oriented farm/brewery that sources locally. Throwback always strives to improve their business operations to lessen their impact on the local and global environment by conserving energy, water and other natural resources, reducing waste generation, recycling, and reducing use of toxic materials.

The brewery is a leader in sustainability because it is committed to environmental excellence and pollution prevention, and to purchasing products that have greater recycled content with lower toxicity and packaging, reducing the use of natural resources. Throwback takes seriously its commitment to crafting beers and food using ingredients sourced from its own Hobbs Farm or within a 200-mile radius. Locally sourcing ingredients reduces the amount of energy used and carbon dioxide produced to transport meat, produce, malt and other goods.

Hobbs Farm is a 12-acre farm that produces a variety of crops year-round, including hops, greens, herbs, fruit and other produce. Chickens and pigs are also inhabitants of the farm, providing entertainment, eggs, pork and sausage, which are used in the brewery's restaurant. All food scraps and some products from the brewing process are composted. The spent grain, the main output from brewing, is given to local farms to feed to their animals and is fed to Throwback's pigs.

Another reason Throwback is a sustainability leader is that every time Throwback brews a batch of beer, it saves about 20 barrels of water, which is then used in brewing the next batch of beer – saving over 64,480 gallons of water annually. The brewery also innovates in dealing with brewery wastewater, providing guidance to many other breweries. Conserving water and treating pollutant-rich wastewater on-site protects nearby waterbodies and ecosystems.

When the sun is shining, the 174 solar panels on the roof of the brewery produce electricity that is either used in real-time by their facilities, or fed back to the grid where it benefits the community (and earns a credit). Each year, the system will generate roughly 60,465 kilowatt-hours (kWhs) of electricity, offsetting the equivalent of driving over 110,000 miles in a gas-powered car and keeping 33 metric tons of greenhouse gas from entering the atmosphere and the Gulf

of Maine ecosystem.

Throwback takes recycling to the next level with the use of growlers and on-site plastic beer ring-pack and aluminum can recycling. The brewery sees anywhere from 65-80% of guests coming in with growlers to swap for full beer. In the restaurant, glassware and growlers are used as much as possible to wash and reuse. The brewery packages take-home beer in 16-ounce cans rather than glass bottles because cans have a smaller environmental footprint. They are lighter and require less energy to transport than glass. Also, aluminum cans have a high recycling rate and recycling cans saves 95% of the energy required to make the same amount of aluminum.

Throwback is always looking for ways to make a difference and reusing existing materials in a new way is just another way they exercise sustainability. They incorporated repurposed wood from the barn in the flooring, tables, seating, bar and throughout the brewery and restaurant. The Pollution Prevention Program has enjoyed working with Throwback Brewery and celebrating their many accomplishments toward sustainability, and it was an excellent opportunity to feature the brewery's work during this webinar series. More than 300 breweries, craft beverage businesses, universities and government agencies registered these webinars.

The first webinar featured Energy Treasure Hunts for Microbreweries and the second webinar explored [Innovative Solutions: CO2 Capture Technology](#). Visit the NHDES blog for more information about the webinars in the [Sustainable Solutions for Craft Beverage Producers Webinar Series](#). ■



# Partnership to understand and reduce exposure to harmful contaminants in Hooksett

Routine sampling conducted in Hooksett for a State project showed uranium present in groundwater at high levels. Knowing that a large proportion of Hooksett residents get their water from residential wells and that drinking water with high levels of uranium puts people at risk for negative health outcomes, a cross-agency team from NHDES and the New Hampshire Division of Public Health Services (DPHS) was formed to respond.

NHDES worked in coordination with NH DPHS, and with the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to develop and implement a plan to sample residential well-water in the Hooksett community, with a goal of characterizing risk and developing health-based recommendations to reduce exposure and risk.

Testing of residential wells in Hooksett showed that residents of the community are more likely to be exposed to high levels of uranium and radon compared to other New Hampshire residents; and some residents are also exposed to other contaminants of concern, including arsenic, manganese and PFAS. Health-based recommendations included additional water testing, home air testing for radon gas, and installation of treatment where indicated by results.



In partnership with programs from across NHDES and DPHS, the APPLETREE (the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry's (ATSDR) Partnership to Promote Local Efforts to Reduce Environmental Exposures) team drafted a findings report with recommendations, and coordinated a presentation to town administration and community members. In addition, a summary document was created and will be distributed with an upcoming town-wide mailing. The APPLETREE team will continue to work with the town of Hooksett to engage the community and facilitate action to promote reduction of exposure to harmful contamination.

The APPLETREE team includes staff from NHDES and from DPHS. We have expertise in health risk assessment, toxicology, epidemiology, health education, community engagement and project management. Through funding from ATSDR, we can work with communities to reduce exposure to environmental hazards, and in turn reduce risk for negative health outcomes associated with exposure. Reach out to [karen.m.craver@des.nh.gov](mailto:karen.m.craver@des.nh.gov) to learn more about how they can partner with you to promote public health! ■

## Out-of-State boater registration



NHDES is reminding all persons operating a motorboat on New Hampshire public waters that is registered in another state (other than New Hampshire) of a new require-

ment to purchase and display a New Hampshire aquatic invasive species decal from NHDES. The new law (RSA 487:43) went into effect on July 1, 2019.

A motorboat is a watercraft of any size equipped with propelling machinery, whether or not the machinery is the principal source of propulsion.

Decals can be purchased online for \$20 each. You can purchase decals online on the [NHDES Invasive Species webpage](#), by clicking on the link for the boater decal, or at the [Out-of-State Boater Decal Purchase Page](#).

The decal must be displayed within three inches of a boat's valid registration decal. Decals should be placed on the port side of the vessel. Decals expire on December 31 each year. Proceeds from the decal program will be used for prevention and management of invasive aquatic species in New Hampshire. ■



29 Hazen Drive; PO Box 95  
Concord, NH 03302-0095

PRSR.T.STD  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Concord, NH  
Permit No. 1478

---

## Summertime is field season



**F**ield season is upon us and that means that many NHDES staff will be outside gathering environmental data. NHDES interns are a crucial part of the field staff and they work diligently to collect water quality data on our lakes and ponds, sample public beaches, search for aquatic invasive species, such as asian clams and milfoil, document stream crossings to help prioritize replacement, and so much more. If you see any NHDES staff out in the field this summer, give them a wave! ■

