



The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the NH Department of Environmental Services

January 2021

The Municipal EcoLink is a monthly e-bulletin designed to inform you of the latest environmental ideas, trends, grants, rules and more from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). We respectfully request that the following is electronically distributed or otherwise made available to your municipal committees, councils and boards. Please feel free to post it on your municipal website as well. You may read past issues at [The Municipal EcoLink](#).

NHDES Response to COVID-19

The coronavirus pandemic has caused many of us to do business differently. NHDES has set up a [COVID-19 webpage](#) as a clearinghouse for information related to any changes in NHDES program activity. NHDES will do its best to communicate any changes directly with our program customers and stakeholders, however please check this webpage regularly, as we will update information as necessary.

Electric Vehicle Purchasing Information

Did you know that municipalities, school systems and some non-profits can purchase electric vehicles (EVs), plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), and higher fuel-economy vehicles off of the New Hampshire state contract? EVs and PHEVs make sense for light-duty fleet diversification and have been shown to have a lower total cost of ownership than conventional gasoline and diesel vehicles. Plus, there are the added benefits of using less energy and emitting less greenhouse gases and other air pollution. To see available vehicles, check out the [2021 Vehicle Index](#), which includes purchase price, a total-cost-of-ownership, and fuel-economy values. The vehicle contract is located on the [state Administrative Services website](#). If you have questions regarding the contract process, please direct them to: alan.hofmann@nh.gov. Questions concerning vehicles should go to the dealers.

Field Code Changed

NHDES Solid Waste Operator Training & Certification Program

The NHDES Solid Waste Operator Training Program has populated the [2021 calendar](#) with classes that are pertinent for solid waste facility operators, owners and permittees. Classes will all be held online for the foreseeable future. Additionally, all of the classes held this past summer and fall were recorded and uploaded to the [SWOT Webpage](#). The recorded and live sessions may all be used for CPD hours as long as operators provide verification of training. Information on verification and CPD eligibility has been emailed out to all operators and [posted online](#). If you have any questions, please reach out to the SWOT Coordinator at SWOT@des.nh.gov.

Notice to Solid Waste Facility Owners and Permittees – 2020 Annual Facility Report Forms

The 2020 Annual Facility Report (AFR) and Post-Closure Report (PCR) forms, used for reporting required information regarding the operation or monitoring and maintenance of your solid waste facility (active or inactive) are available on the [Solid Waste Reporting and Compliance webpage](#). **Do not use the 2019 forms to report your data.** Additionally, when you have completed your form(s), the Solid Waste Management Bureau requests that you submit them in PDF via email to solidwasteinfo@des.nh.gov or upload via [OneStop](#), when possible. If you have questions, please contact the SWMB at (603) 271-2925.

NHDES Instream Flow Program 2021 Priority List

NHDES' Instream Flow Program, in cooperation with the state's Lakes Management Advisory Committee and Rivers Management Advisory Committee, has developed a [2021 Priority List](#) of the next rivers to be studied to develop protected instream flow values. The priority ranking process has identified three additional rivers as priorities for studies: the lower Ashuelot, Isinglass and Pemigewasset rivers. During the first few months of 2021, NHDES will work with stakeholders and the public to confirm these rivers as priorities for protected instream flow studies. This process will include a public hearing in order to receive comments from the public. Please watch the [Instream Flow](#) webpage for further details regarding the public hearing, and [contact us](#) if you have an opinion regarding designated rivers that you believe should be a priority for instream flow protection.

2021 Water Infrastructure Financing Webinar Series

The New Hampshire Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Loan Fund (SRF) Programs will be hosting the 2021 Water Infrastructure Funding Webinar May 4-13, 2021. The webinar will include a series of 2-hour sessions focusing on funding programs administered by NHDES and topics including funding program updates, crafting warrant articles, green infrastructure, energy efficiency, asset management and more. The intended audience includes

current/future loan recipients, community/financial decision makers, public works directors, city/town managers, commissioners, selectmen, municipal and regional planners, consultants/engineers, operators, and others interested in the NHDES-administered funding programs. Registration information and a preliminary agenda will be available soon on the [website](#). **Questions/Contacts:** Emily Nichols, NHDES at (603) 271-8320 or Emily.Nichols@des.nh.gov; Kathleen Bourret, NHDES at (603) 271-2902 or Kathleen.Bourret@des.nh.gov.

Drinking Water and Sewer Rates Dashboard

NHDES, in partnership with the [Environmental Finance Center](#) (EFC), invites you to participate in the upcoming **2020-2021 New Hampshire Water and Wastewater Rates Survey**. Our goal is to support your utility rate-setting and planning decisions by providing an accurate, up-to-date portrait of rates across the state with meaningful comparisons and context. Data from participating utilities will be incorporated into the **free, interactive, online Rates Dashboard**, which allows users to compare rates among utilities according to multiple factors such as utility size, water source type, customer demographics and geography. Additionally, a report and tables summarizing the results of the survey will be published. Feel free to contact Luis Adorno at (603) 271-2472 or luis.adorno@des.nh.gov if you have any questions.

The New Hampshire Drinking Water Festival will be offered virtually in 2021!

The New Hampshire Drinking Water Festival has educated and inspired fourth-graders to conserve and protect our water resources for 27 years. To keep everyone safe, the 2021 festival is moving online. And, to support teachers, students and parents these free online resources will be available March through July. Major themes include the water cycle, watersheds, groundwater, wildlife and the human water cycle. Lessons connect with student's daily lives and explore how they can keep water clean. The online lessons and activities are designed for students in grades 3-5, but with the timeless importance of clean water, students in other grades will also benefit from them. Student in grades 3-5 are invited to participate in this year's Water Poetry Contest. This is a great opportunity to incorporate the language arts and water science. The [Drinking Water Festival's new website](#) is currently under construction, but it can be found and bookmarked for the virtual event this spring. If you would like to learn more, please contact Lara Hooper at lara.hooper@des.nh.gov.

Drought Concerns Continue – Please Share with Human Services Department

The State of New Hampshire has approved a \$1.5 million initiative to provide financial assistance to low-income homeowners on private residential wells that have gone dry or have very little water due to drought conditions. If you have concerned homeowners, direct them to complete [this survey](#) and send an email to droughtwellinfo@des.nh.gov for more information.

The NHDES website got a makeover

On December 8, NHDES launched a new website, complete with an update to the navigation system. All the information you need and want is still there, but is organized in a much more intuitive way, based on environmental topics. There is also a keyword searchable document library that has all NHDES fact sheets, reports, guidance documents, outreach materials and more at your fingertips. The site is fully mobile-ready, making accessing the information you need even easier. If you have trouble finding something or need help of any kind with the new website, please email us at pip@des.nh.gov.

Please send your comments for the editor to editor@des.nh.gov.

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