



The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the NH Department of Environmental Services

January 2023

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](#).

FREE – NH 4th Grade Water Science Fair, Drinking Water Festival and 3rd-5th Grade Water Poetry Contest

Three events – New Hampshire schools may participate in one or all! At the Festival, fourth-grade students will spend the day learning about water quality, conservation, pollution, wildlife and many other water-related topics. Activities are hands-on and students interact with professionals in fields of science, technology, engineering and math. For the New Hampshire state-level Water Science Fair, fourth-graders will conduct research, create an exhibit, write a report and present their findings to a panel of judges. There are a variety of ways the school-level fair can be configured. Guide booklet available. We are happy to discuss ways your school can participate. The Festival and Water Science Fair are free to registered schools and will take place on **May 10, 2023**, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Keene, NH. Registration deadline: **January 31, 2023**. Space is limited. Students in third through fifth grades, homeschooled and in traditional classes, may participate in the Water Poetry Contest. The theme this year is “Water Rising.” Submission deadline: **March 31, 2023**. For more information on all three events and to register, visit [our website](#) or contact Lara Hooper at [\(603\) 271-4071](tel:6032714071) or lara.hooper@des.nh.gov.

Culvert Removal, Replacement and Restoration Grants

The Federal Highway Administration has released a Notice of Funding Opportunity for the National Culvert Removal, Replacement and Restoration Grants. This program is an annual competitive grant program that awards grants to eligible entities for the replacement, removal and repair of culverts or weirs that meaningfully improve or restore fish passage for anadromous fish. Anadromous fish species are born in freshwater such as streams and rivers, spend most of their lives in the marine environment, and migrate back to freshwater to spawn. Eligible entities include states, tribes and local government units. Applications are due Monday, **February 6, 2023**. More information is available on the [Federal Highway Administration website](#).

Climate, Water, Wildlife & Resilience Educator Workshop

Project WET and Project WILD are offering a teacher professional development workshop about climate change. Workshop is designed for middle and high school teachers (formal, non-formal and homeschool) who want to incorporate climate activities and discussions into their lessons. Workshop is on **February 10, 2023**, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at NHDES, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord, NH. [Registration link](#).

Funds Available Through NH Clean Diesel Grant Program – Round 3 Extended, Available Now!

NHDES has approximately \$900,000 of funding available through the New Hampshire Clean Diesel Grant Program. This program provides partial funding to projects in New Hampshire that reduce emissions through replacement or upgrade of diesel-powered vehicles, engines and equipment or through installation of idle reduction technologies. Round 3 closes **March 31, 2023**, at 4 p.m. For more information, visit the [NH State Clean Diesel Program webpage](#).

Water Infrastructure Funding Workshop – April 10-14, 2023

NHDES is hosting a Water Infrastructure Funding Workshop **April 10-14, 2023**. The workshop will include sessions focusing on funding programs administered by NHDES with topics including funding program updates, Build America Buy America (BABA) and other federal provisions, cybersecurity, asset management and more! The intended audience includes current/future loan recipients, community/financial decision makers, public works directors, city/town managers, 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 [State Revolving Fund \(SRF\) webpage](#). If you have questions, please contact either Kim Kelliher, Kim.C.Kelliher@des.nh.gov or Jennifer Brady, Jennifer.E.Brady@des.nh.gov.

Pollution Prevention Workshops for Art and Science Teachers

"School Chemical Safety for Science and Art Classrooms," a workshop for middle and high school science faculty, administrators, and facility operations managers –will be held **April 11 and April 13, 2023**. The trainings will be held in Claremont and Littleton and the cost \$35 per session. Contact Victoria Davis with the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission for more information at vdavis@uvlsrc.org. Topics include "Integrating Safe Practices into your Lab," "Safe Storage and Chemical Management," "Chemical Hazard Risk Minimization," "Identifying and Fixing Unsafe Situations," "Getting Started on a Chemical Hygiene Plan," "Overview of Safety Laws and Regulations" and "Options for Proper, Safe Waste Management." Registration Links are at the following: [Art Teacher \(Littleton\)](#), [Art Teacher \(Claremont\)](#), [Science Teacher \(Littleton\)](#) and [Science Teacher \(Claremont\)](#).

Water Works Operator Certification Exams

Drinking Water Operator Certification examinations will be held on Tuesday, **April 25, 2023**, and Tuesday, **December 5, 2023**, at NHDES, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord. Applications for the exam are due 30 days prior to the examination. There is also an option to take a computer-based exam for Grades I-IV at various locations throughout the state at any time. For more about Water Works Operator Certification, see our [Water Works Operator Certifications](#) webpage.

New Resources for Docks: Save Time and Money

In cities and towns across the Granite State, many dock owners are benefiting from a new voluntary registration process. Voluntary registration is an alternative to getting a permit for every repair or replacement of existing non-tidal permanent docking structures. In addition, it offers an easier way to prove compliance with certain state statutes and rules, whenever you buy or sell properties that include these structures. It is easier and less expensive than other existing wetlands permit options. See a [map of currently registered docks](#). To register your dock, use our [Non-Tidal Docking Structures Registration Form](#).

Annual Facility Reporting for Solid Waste Facilities

It is that time of year again for all permitted solid waste facilities to submit their annual reports. The reports are required for all active facilities and inactive landfills. The Solid Waste Management Bureau will host two online work sessions for those who have questions regarding the information required for their report. You can [register](#) for either of the sessions online at any time. If you have questions regarding the session, please email SWOT@des.nh.gov. For questions regarding the information required on your report, please email swmbcompliance@des.nh.gov.

Cybersecurity Infrastructure Improvement Grants

Drinking water and wastewater systems are encouraged to take advantage of cybersecurity grant funding through the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). **Up to \$50,000 of grant funding** is available per drinking water or wastewater system to implement cybersecurity improvements. The approval process has been streamlined through a revised application, making the process simple and straightforward. For more information, please visit the [Cybersecurity Improvements Assistance webpage](#).

Attention: Schools Receiving ESSER Funds!

If schools in your municipality are recipients of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) grant funds for facility repairs and improvements, NHDES wants to inform you that most renovation and demolition activities in schools are subject to regulations under the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA). Regulations for AHERA can be found at [40 CFR 763, Subpart E](#). For questions about AHERA-related requirements, please contact Anne M. Keach at [\(603\) 271-4555](tel:(603)271-4555), or anne.m.keach@des.nh.gov.

Get the Lead Out of Drinking Water Program

NHDES has created the Get the Lead Out of Drinking Water program to support schools and child care facilities in completing their required lead in drinking water testing. All facilities can receive technical

support, and public schools and licensed child care facilities can receive free sample analyses. For more information and to view testing results, visit www.gettheleadoutnh.org.

2022 Aqueous Film Forming Foam Take Back Program update

Aqueous film forming foam (AFFF), used in firefighting, contains carcinogenic “forever chemicals” that make their way into our groundwater. NHDES is exploring all disposal options, including emerging technologies that can destroy these “forever chemicals.” NHDES has run into some permitting and contracting hurdles along the way, so please bear with us. Although a little later than anticipated, NHDES plans to have a contractor come to your county late Winter/early Spring to pick up your container inventories. Please contact Andy Gould for questions: Andrew.M.Gould@des.nh.gov or call [\(603\) 271-6424](tel:6032716424). More information can be found on the [AFFF Take Back Program webpage](#).

Wastewater State Aid Grant (SAG) Applications

In order to take advantage of recently appropriated funds, the NHDES Wastewater State Aid Grant (SAG) program requests that municipalities that have yet to submit a [grant application](#) for all completed wastewater infrastructure projects that maintained SAG eligibility do so as soon as possible. It is requested that grant applications for SAG-eligible projects be submitted within one year of final completion. Additional information can be found on the [Wastewater SAG webpage](#) or reach out to Nina Buckman at christina.m.buckman@des.nh.gov or [\(603\) 271-3448](tel:6032713448).

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

To receive press releases and other publications of the NH Department of Environmental Services via email, please sign up [on our newsletter subscription page](#).