



The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the NH Department of Environmental Services

April 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](#).

Source Water Protection Conference, May 16

NHDES will hold its 2023 Source Water Protection Conference on May 16 (in-person) in Pembroke, New Hampshire. The conference will feature a full day of presentations concerning US EPA's PFAS National Strategic Roadmap, state legislative and drinking water program funding updates, research on the distribution and fate of PFAS in surface water, monitoring for cyanobacteria in drinking water sources, partnering to conserve critical water supply lands, and guidance on how to craft municipal codes to reduce water use during drought and improve local groundwater protection. For further information, Technical Credit Hours (TCHs) for NH Water Operators, and to register, please visit the [American Ground Water Trust's website](#).

Solid Waste Operator Training – In-Person Classes have Returned for the Summer

NHDES's Solid Waste Operator Training Program will be hosting large in-person classes for the first time since March of 2020 starting **May 15**. The classes being offered this summer are a mixture of in-person, online & hybrid covering myriad of topics from compliance assurance to waste diversion & waste reduction to writing operating plans to negotiating state contracts & grants. The schedule of events is updated on the [NHDES Calendar – SWOT Training](#). In addition, the SWOT Program has updated its website where all of the pre-recorded sessions are stored. Please visit the [SWOT Channel](#) for all of the updates. Contact Tara Mae Albert at Tara.M.Albert@des.nh.gov for questions about the updates and changes.

Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Project Pre-applications

NHDES is now accepting [pre-applications](#) for the 2023 Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) through **Thursday, June 1, 2023, deadline** (by midnight). DWSRF funding is available for community public water system/non-community and non-transient nonprofit public water system infrastructure projects. If you have any questions, please contact Johnna McKenna at Johnna.M.McKenna@des.nh.gov or (603) 271-7017.

Invite - Green Your Fleet Event at NH Motor Speedway & NASCAR Track, June 9

You're invited to Green Your Fleet (GYF) at the NH Motor Speedway on **June 9**. GYF is a full day event and demonstration spotlighting Alternative Fuels, Electric Vehicles, technology and infrastructure. Learn from fleet managers and industry experts how to transition municipal, commercial, and light-duty vehicles and equipment to propane, biodiesel, electric, natural gas, telematics, etc. Join us for networking, lunch, a keynote speaker, panel presentations, vendor exhibits, an on/off-road vehicle and equipment showcase, and a thrilling ride-and-drive on the NASCAR racetrack. Contact Jonathan.M.LaBier@des.nh.gov for more info and [register](#) today.

Consider Necessary State Approvals During Building Permitting Process

Before issuing municipal or local building permits, please note that property owners must also ensure that they have the proper septic system permits to utilize their properties as intended. It is a common problem for buyers of properties to learn – after they've received all the municipal approvals they need – that their property lacks applicable state approvals, and their business plan is no longer achievable. One very common example is when food service establishments are purchased, with the new owner developing a business plan based on the existing number of seats. To get a food service license, the owner must have proof of an operationally approved septic system, as applicable, for the existing or proposed use. Many times, it is at this point that the buyer realizes they can no longer go forward with their business plan.

Approvals from other programs within NHDES including, but not limited to, Wetlands, Shoreland, Alteration of Terrain and Drinking Water, may also be necessary for existing uses or proposed development. It is therefore imperative that, before the issuance of any municipal or local building permits for new structures or the expansion of use of existing structures, the applicant submit verification that all applicable state permits and approvals have been obtained. For more information, visit our Wetlands or Septic Systems webpages, or call [\(603\) 271-2147](tel:6032712147) and ask to speak with someone within the applicable program.

Funds available to upgrade municipally owned boat launches

The Municipal Boat Launch Investment Program has funds available for upgrades to municipally-owned boat launches that provide public access. Up to \$100,000 is available per project. Projects require 25% municipal match. Applications are due June 1, 2023. For more information, see the [Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery FAQ](#).

Citizen Air Monitoring Program (CAMP) for Particulate Matter

NHDES has a new, [citizen scientist program](#) designed to connect private PurpleAir fine particulate matter sensor owners with air pollution experts at NHDES. This is a voluntary and free program that aids in PurpleAir sensor installation, maintenance and data quality.

2023 Dam Inspections to Begin Soon

A letter has recently been sent to all dam owners whose dams are up for inspection this year. Dam inspections will begin in April and are expected to occur through the fall. If you receive a letter and want to be present at the inspection, please let us know by either emailing us at damsafety@des.nh.gov or calling [\(603\) 271-3406](tel:6032713406) to provide a name and contact information. For guidance on dam-related requirements, please check out [Dam Safety, Maintenance and Management 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](#).

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:6032714555), 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.

Learn More about Wetlands

Do you sometimes see extra water on your property, such as after a heavy rain or snowmelt? When it comes to trapping and slowly releasing surface water, nothing works as well as wetlands. Working as

natural sponges, wetlands help people in many ways, including flood storage. Your extra surface water will naturally recede over time, and there should be no cause for concern. For more information on New Hampshire wetlands, visit [our website](#).

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