



## The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services

September 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](#).

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### NHDES Seeks Public Comment on a Planned EV Charging Funding Opportunity

NHDES is hosting listening sessions on **October 4, 2023**, to gather input for a planned grant program to support development of community-based electric vehicle charging infrastructure. The Community Charging Grant program will prioritize downtown areas, rural communities, multi-unit dwellings, tourist attractions, and low-income communities. NHDES has solicited input from interested parties who [can pre-submit responses to NHDES' questions](#) or provide responses during the live session. Interested parties may [register for the noon](#) or [register for the 7pm](#) listening sessions.

### NHDES Solid Waste Management Bureau is Hosting Workshops to Assist Facilities in Writing Compliant Operating Plans

The NHDES Solid Waste Management Bureau (SWMB) announced two workshops specifically geared to solid waste facilities that need help writing or updating their operating plan, which is required by their solid waste permit. The first session "Introduction to Operating Plans" is available either as an in person 2.5 hour workshop or as a 1-hour condensed online version ([Register for the online session](#)). There are two sessions available for the in-person workshop: **October 5 or November 2 from 9 AM to Noon**. The second session "Writing Operating Plans – Work Session" is a 2.5 hour in-person time slot where SWMB staff members will work with permittees and operators to edit, draft and develop adequate operating plans to be held on **October 5 or November 2 from 1 to 4 PM**. Session 1 is a required pre-requisite for Session 2. Seating is LIMITED for the in-person sessions, and registration is required. Information about the sessions is also available on the [NHDES calendar page](#). To register for the in-person sessions, please contact Tara Mae Albert at [SWOT@des.nh.gov](mailto:SWOT@des.nh.gov).

### Still Time to Apply to Granite State Clean Fleets! Funding for Electric Fleets and New Diesel

NHDES has \$10,000,000 available for local governments to replace their older diesel vehicles and equipment with new diesel and electric versions. Funding can cover up to 95% of an approved project's costs, including electric vehicle infrastructure and make-ready expenses. The RFP closes **October 13, 2023**. For more information, visit [the NH Volkswagen webpage](#).

### New Hampshire Environmental Health Conference

The New Hampshire Environmental Health Conference (NHEHC), formerly the New Hampshire Healthy Homes Conference, was re-envisioned in 2022 through a collaborative effort between multiple state agencies to better represent the breadth of environmental health beyond the built environment. The event focuses on the relationship between people and their environment; and fostering healthy and safe communities by promoting sound policy that protects the health, wellbeing and quality of life in all communities throughout New Hampshire. The conference will be held at the Grappone Conference Center in Concord, NH, on **October 26**, from 7:30 AM to 4 PM. Session topics include reducing exposure to PFAS, radon, lead, and other common contaminants in water, air, and soil. There will also be a discussion of new initiatives with asthma, for example, mobile integrated health care and the impact of seasonal weather variations on respiratory health. The closing panel will feature local success stories that have positively impacted environmental health in New Hampshire. See the [conference website](#) for the agenda and registration. For more information, contact [nhevents@jsi.com](mailto:nhevents@jsi.com).

### 2024 Local Source Water Protection Grant Applications Now Available

Local Source Water Protection Grant applications are available now and due **November 1, 2023**. Applicants can be awarded up to \$25,000 for projects protecting drinking water sources or up to \$30,000 for projects that address climate change. For the Grant Application and Information Packet and more details, please visit the [Drinking Water Source Protection Program webpage](#). If you have any questions or would like to discuss your grant project idea, feel free to contact Melissa Macheras at [Melissa.E.Macheras@des.nh.gov](mailto:Melissa.E.Macheras@des.nh.gov) or call [\(603\) 271-2950](tel:(603)271-2950).

### 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](http://www.gettheleadoutnh.org). Funding for the program is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Water Infrastructure Improvements for the Nation (WIIN) Act. In addition, the New Hampshire Drinking Water and Groundwater Trust Fund has awarded \$1.6 million for remediation grants for public and private schools, and is working with the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services to establish a grant program for child care facilities. Information about the remediation grant will be available this fall and will be posted on the [Get the Lead Out webpage](#).

### Water Works Operator Certification Exams

Drinking water operator certification examinations will be held on Tuesday, **December 5, 2023**, at NHDES, 29 Hazen Drive, Concord. Applications for the exam are due 30 days before 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 information, see our [Water Works Operator Certification webpage](#).

### Back to School... Is Your School AHERA Compliant?

As students and faculty return to school, make sure your schools' Asbestos Management Plans are up-to-date and in compliance with the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), 40 CFR 763, Subpart E. The purpose of AHERA is to ensure that local educational agencies (LEAs) safely manage asbestos containing building materials (ACBM) found in schools, to ensure students, faculty and the general public are not exposed to asbestos. This brochure outlines the [responsibilities of all public, nonprofit private, and charter schools](#) in the State of New Hampshire regarding AHERA. NHDES urges all schools to provide a safe and healthy educational environment. For more information, please visit the [NHDES Asbestos in Schools webpage](#), or contact the [NHDES Asbestos Management Program](#) at [\(603\) 271-4555](tel:(603)271-4555).

### FREE – NH 4th Grade Drinking Water Festival and Water Science Fair, 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, technology and many other water-related topics. Activities are hands-on and students interact with professionals in STEM fields. For the New Hampshire state-level **Water Science Fair**, fourth graders will conduct research and present their findings to a panel of judges. 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 8, 2024**, from 9 AM to 2 PM in Plymouth, NH. Registration deadline: **January 31, 2024**. Space is limited. Students in third through fifth grades, home schooled and in traditional classes, may participate in the **Water Poetry Contest**. Submission deadline: TBD March 2024; more information available soon. For more information on all three events and to register, visit us at <https://nhwaterfestival.org> or contact Lara Hooper at [\(603\) 271-4071](tel:(603)271-4071) or [lara.hooper@des.nh.gov](mailto:lara.hooper@des.nh.gov).

### Emergency Repairs Guidance

With all the heavy rains this summer, many towns across New Hampshire had to make emergency repairs to culverts and roadways. If your town is ever faced with an emergency and needs to make repairs in these areas, here is an updated [guidance document](#) with additional resources. For questions on this topic, please email [irm@des.nh.gov](mailto:irm@des.nh.gov) or call [\(603\) 271-2147](tel:(603)271-2147) and ask to speak with the inspector of the day.

### Public Pool Registrations Required!

Owners and operators of public bathing facilities (PBFs) are required by New Hampshire law to register all existing and new public pools or spas with the state, conduct an annual fee-based self-certification of each existing facility and certify that the PBF is operated under the supervision of a certified pool operator. An online registration form is now available on our [PBF Registration Form webpage](#). The annual self-certification fee is \$250 per PBF (regardless of size) up to a maximum of \$1,500 annually for any facility that has more than six PBFs. The online form and payment instructions are available on the [PBF annual Self-Certification Form webpage](#). To learn more about the program, please visit the [NHDES Public Bathing Facility Program webpage](#).

### **State Asbestos Requirements**

A reminder that when residents are requesting permits from the town or city to conduct demolitions or renovations there are also state requirements they may have to comply with. For example, a notification must be received by NHDES at least 10 working days prior to the start of any major asbestos abatement project or any demolition activity. In addition, inspections for asbestos must be conducted and all asbestos-containing materials must be removed before a demolition. There are additional requirements for the proper disposal of the material. Don't forget to inform your residents about also complying with state requirements!

### **Could Registering Your Dock Save You Time and Money?**

Summer is here, and many waterfront property owners and visitors are enjoying (or working on) their docks. For all owners or agents considering repair or replacement of existing, non-tidal docking structures, we now offer a voluntary registration option that may help. For more details, see our [Voluntary Non-Tidal Dock Registration Fact Sheet](#), or to register using the [Non-Tidal Docking Structures Registration Form](#).

### **Stream Crossings and Culverts**

The Granite State features at least 17,000 stream crossings. The NHDES Culvert Maintainer Certification program in partnership with UNH Extension, helps support critical infrastructure and mitigate risks of flooding. For more details on this and other initiatives, visit the [stream crossings section of our website](#).

### **ARM Fund payment calculator**

Our latest Aquatic Resource Mitigation (ARM) Fund calculator is available. Updated annually based on current interest rates and local land values, this tool helps applicants and staff approximate the In-Lieu-Fee (ILF) payment, if this option will be used to meet mitigation requirements offsetting unavoidable impacts authorized under state or federal permit decisions. To view or use the calculator, visit the "Guidance Documents" area on the [Wetlands Mitigation](#) webpage. For other questions about the program, please email [des.arm@des.nh.gov](mailto:des.arm@des.nh.gov).

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