



The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the NH Department of Environmental Services

November 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](#).

NEW RESOURCE FOR HOUSEHOLDS – “Managing My Waste” webpage



The NHDES Solid Waste Management Bureau is excited to share the NEW “[Managing My Waste](#)” webpage. This is a site dedicated to helping the public know how to manage the wastes they create. The A-Z list and corresponding blogs include recycling and disposal information for aerosol cans, different types of batteries, fireworks/flares, fluorescent light bulbs, medicine, propane tanks, smoke detectors, tires, and more! We strongly urge towns to add the link to your websites and social media pages. We also created a QR code that can be posted at all transfer stations!

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. Funding for the program is provided by the U.S. 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](#).

FREE – New Hampshire 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 a.m. to 2 p.m. 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:6032714071) or lara.hooper@des.nh.gov.

Update from NHDES Instream Flow Program

NHDES’ Instream Flow Program staff recently installed their 11th streamflow station on one of the state’s Designated Rivers that previously lacked such gages, collecting data to support future Protected Instream Flow Studies and heightened protection under the Water Division’s rules. The streamflow stations provide near real-time streamflow data for the following rivers:

- Ammonoosuc (Lisbon and Crawford’s Purchase).
- North Branch Contoocook (Antrim).
- Lamprey tributaries: Little (Lee), North (Lee), North Branch (Candia), Pawtuckaway (Nottingham) and Piscassic (Newmarket).

- Middle Branch Piscataquog (New Boston) and North Branch Piscataquog (Goffstown).
- Swift (Albany).

NHDES provides links to a dashboard for each station that shows the past 30 days of water temperature, water level, and water flow, as well as current water temperature and flow. A map of all 11 of the Instream Flow Program's streamflow stations is available on the New Hampshire Geological Survey's [New Hampshire Groundwater Level Monitoring Web Application](#), which includes hyperlinks to the dashboards for each station. Click the Data Layer List button and select NHDES Streamflow Stations to see their locations; click on the station icon to find a hyperlink to its dashboard. The public can also scan the QR code on each station's sign for the dashboard hyperlink. For more information or to report issues, contact Joe Schmidl, Instream Flow Specialist at Joseph.Schmidl@des.nh.gov or [\(603\) 271-3280](tel:6032713280).

Aquatic Resource Mitigation Fund Update

The [ARM calculator](#) has been updated to include a new field for calculating intermittent stream impacts at the appropriate rate. Because the US Army Corps of Engineers assesses stream credits differently for perennial and non-perennial stream impacts, this update ensures that the total ARM fund payment for stream impacts accurately accounts for the sale of stream credits. Additionally, the calculator now includes fields for total stream and wetland credits to facilitate verification of credit sales. Please email des.arm@des.nh.gov with any questions.

For Certified Culvert Maintainers: Quarterly Reporting Deadline

Please note the next [quarterly reporting](#) deadline of **January 15** for October 1 – December 31 work. The Culvert Maintainer Certification program is a [partnership with University of New Hampshire](#) designed specifically for municipal employees as well as state transportation staff who work in and around [stream crossings](#).

New Video Highlights Wetlands Permitting Resource

This [short video](#) offers an overview of the state Natural Heritage Bureau's DataCheck tool for checking records on rare species and natural communities. It features top tips based on stakeholders' frequently asked questions. To use the tool, or for additional questions, visit the [DataCheck](#) section of the New Hampshire Division of Forests and Lands website.

WATCH: New NHDES Video Highlights Land Development Permitting Rule Changes

This [short video](#) offers an overview of New Hampshire's latest "Alteration of Terrain" rules updates, including some that relate to agriculture, redevelopment, stormwater treatment and solar arrays. These updates also include a revised definition of "earth-moving activities" in or near protected shoreland with steeper slopes. To read the full adopted rules, visit the [administrative rules area](#) of the NHDES website

Wetlands Rules Updates Approved and Adopted

[Wetland rules updates](#) became effective on **October 13, 2023**. Several highlights include mitigation hierarchy removal, greater Wetlands Permit by Notification (PBN) form accessibility and ease of use, and new PBN project categories. It is possible you may need to refresh your browser window to access and download the latest updated versions of [wetland permit application forms](#).

Attention Household Hazardous Waste Collection Event Coordinators:

NHDES is now accepting requests for applications for household hazardous waste (HHW) grants for state Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 (**July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025**). Costs eligible for matching grant funds include contractor HHW disposal costs and an educational campaign addressing source reduction, reuse and recycling of HHW. The deadline for submitting a completed grant application is **February 1, 2024**. The grant application can be downloaded from the Grant Forms and Guidance tab on the [NHDES HHW Page](#). For more information, please contact the HHW Program at [\(603\) 271-2047](tel:6032712047), or by email at hhw@des.nh.gov.

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](#).

NHDES Updating State Climate Action Plan

New Hampshire has been awarded a Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to update the state's climate action plan to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases. The EPA has made clear that [meaningful community engagement is essential](#) for this planning process and accessing funding for the implementation grants that follow (i.e., support for local ideas, policies and programs to reduce pollution and build more equitable and resilient communities). Community engagement activities that will focus on building relationships and opportunities for people to voice their ideas are being scheduled between December 2023 and February 2024. If you are interested in joining a virtual or in-person community conversation, please visit the [NHDES CPRG webpage](#).

Reminders Regarding Outdoor Wood Boilers and Residential Wood and Pellet Stoves

When looking to purchase a wood stove or wood-fired hydronic heater (commonly known as open wood boilers) make sure it is certified to the May 2020 EPA emission standards. Also, a law passed in 2008 and amended in 2017 (RSA 125-R) prohibits the sale and installation of uncertified outdoor wood boilers in New Hampshire. Existing non-certified OWBs can remain in place but cannot be moved or reinstalled at another location. For more information, visit the [EPA Certified Wood Heater Database](#) and [NHDES' Home Wood-Burning Appliances webpage](#).

Reminder about Brush Burning Limitations

Residents are reminded that even though there may be snow on the ground and a [fire permit](#) from the local fire warden may not be required, only brush with branches less than 5 inches in diameter can be burned. The burning of construction and demolition debris is prohibited, as well as the burning of domestic waste, tires, trash, treated wood and [other non-conforming materials](#). Residents must also check with the local fire department to determine what other restrictions may apply.

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

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