



The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the NH Department of Environmental Services

February 2024

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](#).

Coming Soon...2024 ARM Fund Grant Round

Over \$5.5 million available for wetland and stream restoration projects in five watershed service areas. The [ARM Fund Program](#) manages a fund comprised of mitigation payments made to offset unavoidable impacts to aquatic resources associated with state and federal permit decisions. The ARM Fund supports the restoration, enhancement, establishment and, in certain circumstances, preservation of ecologically important projects or lands that will effectively sustain aquatic resource functions in the watershed for the long term. To learn more and review application materials, please visit the program [website](#) or email des.arm@des.nh.gov.

School Chemical Safety Trainings

The Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission will present 12 live webinars, starting **March 7, 2024**: "Legacy Chemicals," "What Chemicals to Keep," "Hazardous Waste Regulations," "Safe Storage of Science Chemicals," "Chemical Risks," "How and Why to Write a Chemical Hygiene Plan," "Roles and Responsibilities of Facilities Managers," "Student Safety in the Lab," "Student Safety in the Art Studio," "Student Safety in the Industrial Tech/Shop Area," "Inspection Strategies for Fire Inspectors and Insurance Carriers," and "Roles and Responsibilities of Administrator and Insurance Carriers." Registration information will be available soon. For more information, contact Victoria Davis, Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission, at [\(603\) 448-1680](tel:6034481680) or vdavis@uvlsrc.org.

Solid Waste Facility Annual Report Forms are Available – Due March 31, 2024

Annual Facility Reports for active facilities and non-operating landfills are due by **March 31, 2024**, for calendar year 2023. Active Facilities must submit an [Annual Facility Report](#) and the inactive landfills must submit a [Post-Closure Report](#). These reports are a requirement per your permit. There are instructions for both the [AFR](#) and the [PCR](#) that provide detailed information on what is required to be included in each section of the form. This year, NHDES has also created short instructional videos that will be available on the [SWOT Channel](#) starting January 31. Please view those videos before contacting NHDES as it may be a simple solution that can be answered. Documents needed to fill out these reports include your facility permit, which is available on [OneStop](#); Facility Operating Plan found at the facility; and shipping and receiving slips. The Solid Waste Management Bureau requests that you submit your completed form(s) to solidwasteinfo@des.nh.gov or upload via OneStop. If you have questions, please contact the SWMB at [\(603\) 271-2925](tel:6032712925).

New Hampshire Water Poetry Contest – Free

Open to all New Hampshire students in grades 3-5, including homeschoolers. Contest theme: Imagine a Day Without Water (and no bottled water either!) Submission deadline: **March 31, 2024**. [Contest guidelines and submission information](#) are available online along with [water education videos](#) (organized by theme). Questions? Contact Lara Hooper at lara.hooper@des.nh.gov. (To learn about our in-person Water Festival, Science Fair and Poetry Contest, visit us at <https://nhwaterfestival.org>.)

Mapper's Workshop

This year's Mapper's Workshop, put on by the New Hampshire Geological Survey, will be held on **Tuesday, April 9**, starting at **8 AM** and lasting until mid-afternoon, at the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (7 Hazen Drive in Concord). The workshop features presentations and results from

geologists working in New Hampshire that showcase their surficial and bedrock mapping work during the past year, and how their applied and scientific contributions further our knowledge of New Hampshire geology and its use by stakeholders. If you plan to attend, please RSVP to Rebecca LeCain by emailing geology@des.nh.gov before **Friday, March 8**.

NHDES has received New DERA Funding

NHDES has been awarded new Diesel Emissions Reduction Act (DERA) funding from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for our NH Clean Diesel Grant Program. We anticipate releasing a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) by **April 2024**. This will be structured and have similar requirements to [the prior RFP](#). If your municipality has a project in mind that would require approval at Town Meeting, we urge you to present your project and obtain approvals in advance of the RFP's release. Please visit the [NH Clean Diesel website](#) for more information or [email us](#).

Water Infrastructure Funding Workshop

NHDES is hosting a Water Infrastructure Funding Workshop **April 8-12, 2024**. The workshop will include sessions focusing on NHDES administered funding programs with topics including, funding program updates, asset management, PFAS and lead updates, 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 NHDES Events [webpage](#). If you have questions, please contact the NHDES Event Coordinators at dwsrf@des.nh.gov.

Food Waste Diversion & Composting Workshop Series

NHDES has partnered with NRRA and Mark King of Maine DEP to develop a workshop series that discusses all aspects of Food Waste Diversion. Workshops will address everything from the basics of food waste and food waste diversion to specifics on how to implement a food waste diversion program within your community, including outreach and community education. Facility or organization decisionmakers are encouraged to attend these workshops, along with their operators (if the decisionmaker is not an operator) so lessons learned can turn into local action more quickly and easily. [Register](#) EARLY as space is limited. The sessions are in Concord, NH on **April 16 and 17**.

Water Works Operator Certification Exams

Drinking Water Operator Certification Examinations will be held on **April 23, 2024**, location TBD. 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 the [Operator Certification webpage](#).

National Small Business Week April 28-May 4, 2024

According to data from [U.S. SBA](#), over 97% of all businesses in New Hampshire are small businesses with under 20 employees. To celebrate Small Business Week, consider supporting small businesses by shopping local, sharing on social media and posting reviews. NHDES' [Small Business Technical Assistance Program \(SBTAP\)](#) will celebrate Small Business Week by highlighting the program services and other NHDES small business assistance providers. The public can follow along on Facebook, X, and Instagram.

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 million for remediation grants for public and private schools that is live and available now. The New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services is working to establish a \$400,000 grant program for child care facilities that will be available later this spring. The details for both opportunities are on the "Available Funding" page of our website.

Reminder about Renovation and Demolition Projects and Asbestos

Asbestos is extremely hazardous to your health and the environment. As a result, residents are reminded that there are strict rules in place pertaining to the handling and abatement of asbestos. It is not safe to assume that because a structure was built after a certain date, it is safe to renovate or demolish without first identifying whether asbestos is present. Most demolition and renovation projects require that a notification be sent to NHDES before any work is done. Any asbestos identified must be abated before any activity. In addition, any asbestos containing waste must be disposed of in accordance with the rules. For more information contact NHDES at [\(603\) 271-3503](tel:603-271-3503) or go to the NHDES website at <https://www.des.nh.gov/waste/asbestos>.

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](#).

Septic Systems Public Record Update

Progress continues toward making more public records easier to access. 2024 marks the start of a multi-year effort to make more [septic system records](#) available in just a few clicks. Our first phase of this project is starting with records from 1967 through the late 1980s. Please note that records for septic systems legally installed after 2016 already have this level of public access. For the best chance of finding your results quickly, we recommend you [check SSB OneStop first](#). Your other best bet for finding accurate results quickly is knowing (or finding and providing) the original owner at the time of installation. This information can be found at the town and/or at nhdeeds.org. Records digitization efforts are ongoing, and we look forward to sharing additional updates as they become available.

Annual Drinking Water, Stormwater, & Wastewater Asset Management Workshop

NHDES will be hosting their annual Asset Management Workshop on **October 30, 2024** in Pembroke, NH. This year's theme will be "Bringing It All Together." The annual workshop focuses on asset management topics relating to Drinking Water, Stormwater and Wastewater infrastructure. Every year the event brings together professionals ranging from utility managers and operators, public works staff, community administration, consultants, and other asset management enthusiasts from around New Hampshire. For additional save-the-date information visit the following link: <https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/am-workshop-save-the-date.pdf>

How Voluntary Dock Registration Could Save You Time and Money

[Voluntary dock registration](#) makes it easier to repair or replace existing non-tidal permanent docking structures. In addition, it offers an easy way to show that docking structures, whether seasonal or permanent, comply with relevant state statutes and rules. This is especially useful when selling properties that include such structures. Registrations are valid for five years, or until the property changes ownership. For more information on the benefits, the alternatives to voluntary registration, and whether your dock qualifies, please [consult our voluntary non-tidal dock registration fact sheet](#) or [visit the docking structures and shoreland stabilization](#) section of our website.

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

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