

# Groundwater Education: Protecting the Public Water Supply

## “Coordinating an Education Event in Your Community”

Most people take their groundwater and drinking water supply for granted. Greater awareness about the resource can help people make the right choices and collectively protect the drinking water supply in your community. Educating students and teachers in your community about local groundwater conditions and where they get their drinking water is one way you can begin to build appreciation for the resource. Below are some suggestions to help you get started in sharing this message!



### *How do I get started?*

1. Consider the grade or age you wish to target. (4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> grade works best.)
2. Contact the school & teacher(s) to determine support / participation. (Most Important!)
3. Ask teachers for class size or number of students participating.
4. Determine where and when event would be held? (Site Location, Fall or Spring, etc.)
5. If event is outdoors, plan for inclement weather. Designate an alternate date or location.
6. Consider topics and activities you want to present such as:
  - The Water Cycle & Groundwater Movement and Soils
  - Geology & Groundwater Basics 101
  - How can my Drinking Water Become Polluted?
  - Is my Water Safe to Drink?
  - A Tour of the Community Water System & Water Conservation
  - Add your ideas and issues you want to focus on!!!
7. Identify local resource staff (State, County & City) who may be able to assist you.

### *What else can I do to make a Groundwater Education Event a success?*

- Focus on activities that are “**hands on**” and “**interactive.**”
- Request direct teacher involvement in planning the event.
- Involve local resource staff familiar with local water issues in your area as needed.
- Limit each student activity to 20 - 30 minutes.
- Use ideas provided by teachers and local experts



*Please contact any of the MRWA SWP Staff if you have questions at (800) 367-6792!!!*

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Below is a description of activities and example “Schedule of Events” that could be used to hold a Groundwater Education Day. You may decide to complete one activity described below at your school, or modify and use the entire “Schedule of Events” for the day. Each topic listed has guidance material available that can be downloaded from our website at: [www.mrwa.com](http://www.mrwa.com) (Click on the Sourcewater Tab on the home page and look for “Groundwater Education Activities”)

### *Community Groundwater Education: “Template Schedule of Events”*

- 8:50am – 9:05**      **Students Arrive: Introduction & Welcome**  
*(Students arrive. Brief welcome given by City Officials)*
- 9:10 – 11:30**      **Groundwater Education Events & Activities Begin**  
*(Plan 20 min. for each activity & 5 minutes between activities)*
- 9:10 – 9:30**      **Groundwater Movement & Soils:** Interactive game using soils of sand, gravel & clay to demonstrate water movement in different types of soils.  
*Outcomes:* Students learn terms of permeability, porosity and how these terms relate to water movement and contaminant movement soils.
- 9:35 – 9:55**      **Groundwater Basics 101:** Students learn and see what an aquifer, confining layer, water table & wells are and discuss geology conditions.  
*Outcomes:* Students connect groundwater and basic geology with how local groundwater may become polluted from land surface contaminants.
- 10:00 – 10:20**      **How can Drinking Water become polluted?** Students learn how groundwater and surface water can become polluted based on different urban and agricultural point and non-point sources of pollution.  
*Outcomes:* Students learn the difference between point and non-point pollution and how land use activities can impact surface & groundwater.
- 10:25 – 10:35**      ***10 Minute Break***
- 10:40 – 11:05**      **Is My Water Safe to Drink?** Water clarity, taste or smell does not always mean water is safe or unsafe to drink.  
*Outcomes:* Students will learn about contaminants, some of which cannot be detected by sight, smell or taste alone.
- 11:10 – 11:30**      **Water Plant Tour:** Students visit the water treatment plant and learn about the water distribution system. Water use and conservation practices will be explored.  
*Outcomes:* Students learn about the local water system and conservation.
- 11:35am**      ***Students depart & head back to school for Lunch***

*A maximum of 25 students per activity is recommended. Depending on the number of students, you will need to decide to replicate or repeat activities as needed. Work with local resource staff to coordinate event topics and identify presenters. Please contact any of the MRWA SWP Staff if you have questions at (800) 367-6792!*