



The Municipal EcoLink

An e-bulletin from the
NH Department of Environmental Services

January 2010

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 (DES). We respectfully request that the following is read into the minutes of your municipal committees, councils and boards. Please feel free to post it on your municipal website as well.

How Does Your Town Rank for Radon?

Are you a "Red" town? Not politically, but as a geographic area that tests high for radon levels. If your town is pink or red on the radon map at http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/air/pehb/ehs/radon/documents/radon_by_town.pdf, your residents are at a higher risk of radon exposure than other areas of the state. January is Radon Awareness Month. To help keep your community safe and healthy – regardless of your town's color – encourage homeowners to check their indoor air quality with a simple radon test kit, which are available for sale from most home improvement and hardware stores and on-line. Municipal web masters are welcome to download the above radon map for their municipalities' web site. For more information, please see the Radon Program at www.des.nh.gov or contact owen.david@des.nh.gov.

ARM Grant Applications for Watersheds Now Available

The New Hampshire Aquatic Resource Mitigation Program is currently accepting grant applications for funding projects within the Connecticut-Ashuelot River, Vernon Dam to Millers River Watershed, as well as within the Pemigewasset River Watershed. It has also extended the grant application deadline for funding projects within the Winnepesaukee River Watershed. The ARM Fund provides an in-lieu fee payment alternative for permit applicants to consider when striving to meet state and federal wetland mitigation requirements. For full information, please go to the DES Wetlands Mitigation web page at <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wetlands/wmp/index.htm> or contact Lori Sommer at (603) 271- 4059 or lori.sommer@des.nh.gov.

DES Awarded \$1M Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant

The Brownfields Coalition Assessment Grant provides funding for inventorying and assessment of brownfields sites, and preparation of cleanup planning documents for assessed brownfields sites. Although the terms of the grant primarily limit funded work to Coos, Grafton and Carroll counties, the grant also funds statewide site inventorying. It also allows for brownfields assessment and cleanup planning assistance elsewhere in the state, provided the serviced communities have socioeconomic characteristics similar to those of the North Country communities. Eligible municipalities, quasi-governmental agencies and non-profits interested in receiving site identification and inventorying services or cleanup planning services should contact the DES Brownfields Program coordinator at keith.dubois@des.nh.gov or (603) 271-2987 for further information.

Rock Blasting and the Municipal Role in Protecting Groundwater

DES is concerned with preventing, detecting and mitigating adverse impacts on groundwater and water supplies related to rock blasting, such as the release of nitrates, nitrites and volatile organic compounds. Short-term exposure to nitrate and nitrite in groundwater above health-based standards can quickly result in adverse health effects to certain populations. According to the annual Minerals Year Book, published by the USGS, the use of explosives in New Hampshire has increased by 400 percent from 1994 through 2007. The increase in the use of explosives is likely due to land development trends, a lack of remaining suitable building sites in the southern part of the state, and the development of mobile rock crushing technology. Increased use of explosives in developed areas, coupled with over 200,000 drinking water supply wells in New Hampshire, increases the importance of implementing measures to protect drinking water sources. DES has a draft publication documenting the potential impacts on drinking water supplies, and the best management practices to prevent, detect or mitigate these impacts, as well as the legal authority for municipalities or the state to regulate blasting relative to the protection of water resources. For more information, please contact Brandon Kernen at (603) 271-0660 or brandon.kernen@des.nh.gov.

Please send your comments for the editor to editor@des.nh.gov. To receive press releases and other publications of the NH Department of Environmental Services via e-mail, please sign up at www.des.nh.gov/media/enews/index.htm.