

Providing Groundwater Education to Kids

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An Opportunity for 'Easy' Wellhead Protection Plan Implementation

Many reading this article can most likely claim an association with the water industry in some way. While a good portion of your days may be tuned into providing a safe/quality water product to customers, many in the water industry also devote significant time and energy to increasing public awareness of water issues. It's always encouraging to see the amount of water resource educational materials that reaches the general public through these efforts. But, it's even better when those materials can be directed at a population that is endlessly fascinated by the world around them, and empowered by knowledge to make decisions about their own behavior that is good for resource conservation. If you haven't already guessed, I'm referring to our kids!

Minnesota Rural Water Association (MRWA) staff has long believed that the education of our children is crucial for the success of any water education effort. After all, kids are the decision-makers of tomorrow who already have the ability to influence others, such as their brothers, sisters, parents, and grandparents.

"If you haven't already guessed, I'm referring to our kids!"

In recognition of children's importance in the scheme of water education, as well as the role that their teachers play as the primary conveyers of science educational materials, MRWA staff has worked to assemble lessons relating to groundwater education that is appropriate for a fourth-grade level science lesson. In an attempt to get these materials into the hands of those that can convey the information most effectively, educational packets are assembled and mailed to MRWA municipal member systems early every fall. It is MRWA's hope that these materials will then be forwarded on to each district fourth-grade teacher.

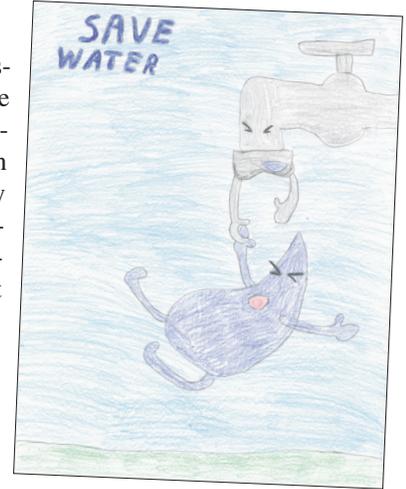
In all, there are four lessons which cover the following topics:

- 1) Groundwater Basis;
- 2) Groundwater Movement;
- 3) Groundwater Pollution; and
- 4) Groundwater Conservation.

Each lesson includes topic-related activities, as well as student discussion questions to help bring out the important points. The topics and related activities are likely to be helpful to fourth grade science teachers since the lessons and activities will include many aspects of the state of Minnesota fourth-grade science curriculum guidelines.

For public water supply systems that are working on the implementation of the system's wellhead protection plan, this is also an easy way to complete a public education task. Many plans contain action measures that direct the public water supply system to provide educational materials to the public, and some plans even specifically name local schools as the recipients of

this information. **If you are designated your system's wellhead protection manager, please keep in mind that you may be satisfying this implementation activity by delivering the MRWA water education packet to your local elementary school.**



In addition to the science curriculum information, MRWA will continue to hold an annual poster contest. The poster contest information will be mailed with the science

curriculum information, and the contest is open to fourth grade students. All contest entries must arrive at the MRWA office by February 1, 2015. Contest materials can also be downloaded at: www.mrwa.com/waterweek.html. While the MRWA staff selects the top three entries from the initial pool, the MRWA Technical Conference attendees in March will have an opportunity to view the three finalists and vote for the winning entry! *Last year's winner, Jose Reveles from Prairie Elementary School in Worthington, is shown above with Eric Roos (right) representing Worthington Public Utilities and Jose's teacher Mr. Cory VanBriesen (left).*



We hope that you are as enthusiastic as we are here at MRWA about children's groundwater education. Please take advantage of the educational tools in the water education packet to promote these events with elementary school teachers in your school district. For more information, please call the MRWA office at (800) 367-6792.