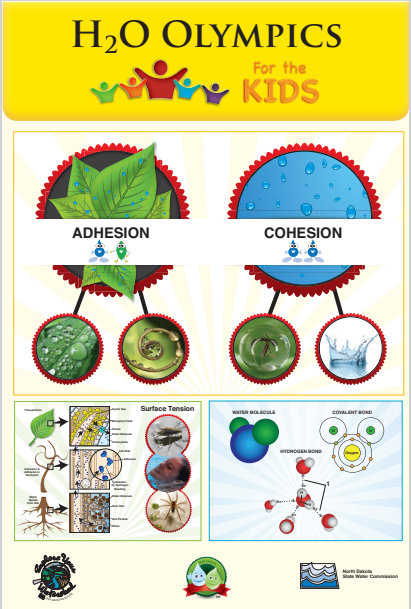
The Oxbow

FROM THE NORTH DAKOTA STATE WATER COMMISSION

2018

WATER FESTIVALS CONCLUDE AND INTEREST CONTINUES TO GROW



Are we drinking the same water as dinosaurs? How many gallons of water does it take to produce one order of fries? How about, what is a watershed? Just about everyone who has attended a water festival in North Dakota knows the answer to these questions, and much more. These are just a few of many questions that students explore as they gain a better understanding of the importance, and complex dynamics of water.

The 2018 Water Festival season has ended with a record total of over 7,000 3rd through 5th graders, across the state of North Dakota, participating in a festival held in their respective communities or watersheds.

For those who are unfamiliar with water festivals, a common question asked is - "What do students learn while attending a water festival?" With that in mind, we picked out our most popular activities to share with you, so you can gain a deeper understanding of why water festivals have become so popular with schools and teachers as an effective means of introducing water education to our youth.

EXAMPLE WATER FESTIVAL ACTIVITIES

INCREDIBLE WATER JOURNEY - Did you know we never lose a drop of water? It just becomes a part of the water cycle. In this activity, each student becomes a water drop and experiences a wonderful individual journey as they maneuver through systems such as ground water, lakes, clouds, oceans, animals, plants and more.

BLUE BEADS - Students learn to define a watershed and understand the impact that seasons, storms, and development have on water movement through watersheds.

H2O OLYMPICS - Students learn that water is the universal solvent because of its chemical nature, and take a scientific approach to understanding H2O. They learn about water's three unique properties – adhesion, cohesion, and surface tension. And conduct hands-on experiments to understand how those properties work in the real world.

THE PUCKER EFFECT – Students observe how ground water transports pollutants and simulate ground water testing to discover potential sources of contamination. That idea is taken a step further with real world application by giving students a budget and a cost for each sample they take. This allows the student to recognize that sampling, and mitigation efforts have a cost, and those costs have implications to landowners, and the public and private sector. As part of this activity, students also gain an understanding of both nonpoint and point source pollution concepts.

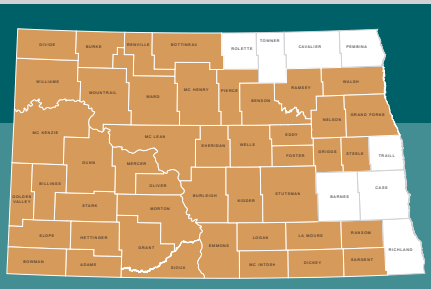
LONG HAUL – For most of us, getting water is as easy as turning on the faucet. In this activity, students get a brief history in water access and availability to early settlers. Then the students are challenged to see how long it takes to move 32 gallons of water from one point to another in a relay race. This simple activity drives home how technology, such as modern water treatment and plumbing make our lives so much easier today.

AQUA BODIES – Students learn that water is essential to every bodily function. From our blood, to sweating, to our joints, kidneys, digesting food, and every breath we exhale. They leave with an understanding of how important clean water is to our health.

REACHING YOUR LIMITS – By playing a game, students gain a better understanding of the effort involved in meeting drinking water standards, especially when water quality declines. Students are able to explain the basic relationship between water quality and water treatment.

MACRO MAYHEM – Students learn that appearances can be deceiving as they learn that what may look sparkling and clean may not be clean at all. They play a game of tag as they simulate how a diverse population of macroinvertebrate organisms can give insight to the health of our water ecosystems.

WOULD YOU DRINK THIS WATER? – Students gain an understanding of how much fresh water is on the earth and the difference between renewable and nonrenewable resources. Students conduct experiments on six samples of water and determine if they "Would drink this water?" Once students determine which sample they think is the cleanest sample, they then learn the "pollutant" in each sample. Pollutants range from unsweetened drink mixes and salt, to food coloring and other extracts.



Commission Adds Counties To
Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Program

In October, the Water Commission added Benson, Eddy, Foster, Grand Forks, Griggs, Nelson, Ramsey, Steele and Walsh Counties to those eligible for funding assistance through the Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Assistance Program.

The nine counties were added due to ongoing dry conditions in the northeastern portion of the state in late September and early October, including D3 "extreme drought" designations by the National Drought Mitigation Center for three counties in that area. By Executive Order, the Commission includes any counties with extreme drought designations, and adjacent counties, to those eligible for funding.

The program provides 50 percent cost-share assistance, of up to $3,500 per project, with a maximum of three projects per applicant, to eligible livestock producers in designated counties experiencing drought-related impacts to their livestock operations.

Eligible items include: new water wells; rural water system connections; pipeline extensions and pasture taps; and associated works, labor, and materials to complete and develop new drought-resilient water supply projects.

Since the Commission reactivated the program back in June 2017, 440 projects have been completed – at a cost of about $1.3 million. As of the end of October, funding was still available for livestock producers in eligible counties to apply for assistance.

For additional details about the Program, please visit the Water Commission's website at www.swc.nd.gov and scroll down to "Drought Disaster Livestock Water Supply Project Assistance Program." For specific questions about program eligibility, call (701) 328-4989 or email swclivestock@nd.gov.