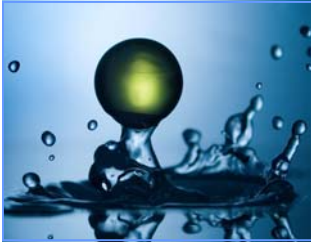


Project WET

Situation



Nothing is more essential to life on earth than water. Every living animal and plant requires an adequate supply of high quality water, and throughout human history there has been a clear, direct relationship between the abundance of clean water, population density, and quality of life. In today's society, water is often taken for granted.

As New Jersey's population continues to grow and water sources are further constrained, more must be done to safeguard a sustainable water supply. Efforts need to be made to change people's behavior to encourage them to conserve water. When landfill space started to become limited, the country began recycling. Recycling programs began in the elementary school classrooms where children were taught the importance of recycling. The children then took these important lessons home and taught their parents. We need to begin similar efforts for water conservation. We need to educate the children so they can teach their parents. This way we change behavior and conserve water.

Action

New Jersey Water Savers invested in a program called Project WET (Water Education for Teachers). Project WET provides teachers and resource professionals with accredited workshops designed to provide non-advocacy, hands-on, interdisciplinary water education materials and instructions. Since 1984, Project WET, an award-winning 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization, has dedicated itself to the mission of reaching children, parents, teachers, and community members of the world with water education.

Teachers from the City of Rahway, East Greenwich Township, and Egg Harbor Township have been trained in this program. Teachers who finish the Project WET course are eligible for a \$1,500 grant to hold a *Make a Splash Water Festival*. Egg Harbor Township received a grant and held their first student run *Egg Harbor Township Make a Splash Water Festival* on June 2, 2010. An important component of this program is the take home message. Students will have an opportunity to apply their knowledge of water conservation with their families at home.



Children learn about Rain Barrels at the *Make a Splash Festival*, Egg Harbor Township, NJ.

Project WET

Impact

Since 1995, over 1,000 New Jersey educators have attended a Project WET workshop. This program has the potential to raise water conservation awareness in a similar fashion as the successful recycling program in New Jersey. New Jersey Water Savers will be interviewing teachers that have taken this course to see how much of what they learned went back to their classroom and ultimately home with the students.

New Jersey Water Savers Partnership

New Jersey Water Savers is a partnership between the Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and the United States Environmental Protection Agency. This partnership was created to provide leadership to promote water conservation throughout New Jersey. For more information on our partnership efforts, visit us at www.water.rutgers.edu.

