

Date: 3/24/2026

Your Name: Tara Schroeder

Your School: Green Mountain Conservation Group serving Freedom Elementary School, Sandwich Central School, KA Brett School, Tamworth in Carroll County, NH

Grade Level(s): 4-8

Course(s) Taught: Environmental Education

Number of Students Involved (Total): 115

Name of your scientist partner and their institution, and any other partners (other partners can include, but are not limited to, collaborations within the school, community groups, non-profit organizations such as the YMCA, or stand out family or friend mentors that helped your project succeed):

Amy Hudnor, NH DES, Chocorua Lake Conservancy, Cook Memorial Library, two AmeriCorps members, four trained, community volunteers from Freedom, NH, Effingham, NH, and Parsonsfield, ME.

Teacher Profile: A brief biography of yourself. How long have you been teaching? What did you study in school? What are you passionate about inside and outside the classroom? Why are you interested in the All About Arsenic+ project? How long have you been participating in SEPA and how were you recruited to participate?

Tara Schroeder is the Education Coordinator for Green Mountain Conservation Group (GMCG) in Effingham, NH. She has served this nonprofit organization on and off since 2003, bringing education and community science programs to students in schools across the greater Saco River Watershed in NH and Maine, as well as the general public. Among the programs she launched in area schools is GET WET! (Groundwater Education Through Water Evaluation and Testing) which teaches students about the importance of drinking water safety and allows them to test their well water at school for various contaminants. When she heard about the SEPA All About Arsenic+ project, she knew it would fit nicely with the GET WET! program and help bring important water testing to families in the watershed who may not have the ability to test their water for toxic heavy metals, especially since about 80% of the people in the Ossipee Watershed region of NH get their drinking water from private wells. On a personal level, she understands first-hand the importance of knowing your home's water quality after learning her own well water was contaminated with lead and causing her young daughter's anemia. She is a passionate supporter of watershed protection, having helped successfully pass Groundwater Protection Ordinances in a number of towns. She has worked as a teacher, workshop leader, volunteer coordinator, and group outreach coordinator for the Appalachian Mountain Club, a teacher for Nature's Classroom, and as trip leader and Camp Director at Camp Cody. Tara returned to GMCG as Education Coordinator in 2018, and has expanded and developed place-based nature programs at GMCG's conservation center and added more community science programs like Big Night amphibian migration monitoring with salamander brigades each year, pollinator and plant iNaturalist research and education programs and features at the conservation center like the pollinator garden and pollinator field. Tara is passionate about environmental protection and teaching others how to be good stewards of their surroundings. She leads numerous programs for local schools and summer camps throughout the year like the Volunteer Biological Assessment Program, Trout in the Classroom, the Less Plastic Initiative, and GET WET!/AAA. For

many years she has advocated for drinking water safety and testing, assisting area residents with getting their wells tested through the NH DES state lab, facilitating the RadonLibrary program in eight local libraries to bring free radon testing to the region, and organizing programs and events about water quality issues with partners at NH DES and others on topics such as PFAs and salt reduction. It was through these collaborations with NH DES that she learned about the AAA project. She holds a BA from Bowdoin College in Anthropology and Environmental Studies with a minor in Biology, and her MS in Environmental Education from Lesley University/Audubon Expedition Institute.

Abstract: Provide a 500-word summary of your project. Describe the **curriculum**. How was drinking water sampling, **data analysis**, and **science communication** integrated into that curriculum? Provide specifics (number of samples collected, what the samples were analyzed for, how Tuva was used, what opportunities students had to talk about their data through some public outreach, etc...). Did students use the **Science Communication Toolkit** and/or Solutionaries Framework to prepare for this outreach event or guide their participation in SEPA this school year? Did students participate in an **Intergenerational Learning** activity (pH exercise etc.)? Please include anecdotes or stories in this section!

This was the first year of integrating the AAA project into GET WET!, and we have another few weeks of programming with schools at this time. Programs for families and the general public started in January with a program on 1/14/26 with scientist partner Amy Hudnor on Zoom, cohosted by GMCG, Chocorua Lake Conservancy and Cook Memorial Library in Tamworth, NH. More than 50 people registered for the program with over 30 attending, learning about common contaminants in drinking water and their health impacts, the importance of well testing, and the GET WET! and AAA programs. Here is the program [recording](#) and links to those presentations: [Amy's presentation](#) and [Tara's presentation](#).

We held a GET WET!/AAA Info. Session on Zoom on 1/21/26 for the public, AmeriCorps members and volunteers helping with the program this year. Here is a [link](#) to that presentation.

An [in-person training](#) for GET WET!/AAA as held for AmeriCorps members and volunteers on 1/29/26. Participants practiced doing the in-class testing stations that they would later be leading in the classrooms.

We wrote an article for local papers (Carroll County Independent) about the project as well as our [newsletters](#) (below).

We created a helpful sampling video instructional [video](#) for students, parents and caregivers, and created our own kits for students with all of the necessary data sheets, permission forms, sampling instructions and sampling bottles.

A total of 19 programs were held in 3 schools for the GET WET!/AAA program this year on 1/29/26, 2/4/26, 2/11/26, 2/9/26, 3/2/26, 3/5/26, 3/9/26, 3/19/26, 3/25/2026. We have four more programs scheduled for 3/30/26 at one of the schools. Programs included previsits which oriented students to local geology, drinking water resources, common contaminants, the water cycle and watershed concepts, and drinking water testing. Students are given their well testing kits on previsit days. Testing days involved students in six hands-on stations where they tested their well water from home for six different parameters, including: pH, conductivity, chloride/sodium chloride, nitrates/nitrites, iron, and hardness. Volunteers, AmeriCorps members and staff led these stations and taught students what they were testing for, why, how to perform the tests using reagents, titrants, test strips and handheld meters, and what their results meant. This is often the most exciting part of the program for students as it involves hands-on science, and they are often working 1:1 with the person leading the station, which allows for more meaningful interactions, questions, curiosity, and is a great example of how we include intergenerational learning for students in the program. Finally, post visit presentations go over students' results in the form of graphs, charts and statistics that GMCG's AmeriCorps members prepare, as well as Tuva demonstrations for future use by teachers and students in the classroom when data from the lab becomes available, outreach ideas to communicate data to others, and how using tools like Google Maps and GIS mapping can help us understand land use activities that can impact drinking water quality. Here are links to [previsits](#) and [post visits](#), as well as photos from our testing days, below. We also did another program with Freedom Elementary School so far to create water-themed poetry about their experiences with GET

WET!/AAA and other watershed education programs throughout the year, to be entered into a statewide poetry contest. Our science partner Amy Hudnor was able to participate in the testing day at one of our schools, and also provided the three families with elevated lead, arsenic and uranium in their drinking water with Zero Water pitchers.

Details

Did you...

	No	Yes	Where appropriate, how many?
Collaborate with your Scientist Partner? - If so, how? We collaborated on a public program on Zoom, press release, and testing day in one of the schools.	☐	☒	_____
Use the Science Communication Toolkit? - If so, how? Examples given in post visit presentations to schools.	☐	☒	_____
Use the Solutionaries Framework? - If so, how?	☒	☐	_____
Use any Intergenerational Activities? - If so, how? Yes – testing days involve in-person experiments and testing with trained community volunteers (retired teachers and chemists) and AmeriCorps members.	☐	☒	_____
Collaborate with any other teachers in your school? - If so, who and what do they teach? We collaborate with multiple classes/teachers/teachers aids at each school.	☐	☒	_____
Conduct any experiments? - If so, what kinds of questions did students ask? Testing days were when students conducted water testing on their well water in the classroom. They typically ask about the parameter they are testing for and what their results mean.	☐	☒	_____
Go on any field trips? - If so, where and why?	☒	☐	_____
Have any guests visit your classroom? How many? - Who and why? What did the guest do? 2 AmeriCorps members, 4 volunteers, 1 scientist partner, 2 GMCG staff members helped deliver the program, testing days, etc. as outlined above	☐	☒	7

Have a Community Meeting? - If so, where was it, what did the students do, how many people attended, etc...?	☒	☐	_____
Have other Outreach Events? - If so, where were they, what did the students do, how many people attended, etc...? Public program, training, info. session about the project, private well testing.	☐	☒	3
Use your classroom award to purchase anything for your classroom? - If so, what, and how did you use it? We used the award for materials and supplies for testing kits, postage, and printing.	☐	☒	\$500

Describe the student, or group of students, whose work most exemplified the All About Arsenic+ project this school year. What were they excited about? How did that facilitate their learning? Please include anecdotes and stories here.

Students get excited about doing their water tests in the classroom and becoming “scientists” for the day. They are interested in their results and what they mean, and love the hands-on aspect of testing days. One student from Freedom Elementary School exclaimed that he learned more during testing day than any other day at school. Students created posters to share in their school about the importance of testing drinking water. In the past they have shared their results with school administrators and maintenance in order to advocate for water filtration systems to mitigate high levels of chloride in their school’s water. We are still doing programs at this time, so I am sure there will be more stories, outreach, etc. with students to come.

Reflect on your students’ primary learning outcomes/gains with reference to data literacy, science communication, and using data visualizations in communication. What are they getting out of their involvement in this project? Please include anecdotes and stories here.

Students learn through GET WET!/AAA about how data is analyzed through the use of graphs, charts and statistics, as well as how we can better understand water quality issues through the use of maps. They are also introduced to Tuva so that they can conduct their own investigations of the data in the classroom, ask questions, and learn how to interpret and share their results with others. We are still in the midst of this aspect of the program, so I hope to have more information at a later date about learning outcomes and stories. I also plan to follow up with teachers to get their feedback about this as I usually do once the program is completed.

If you are a teacher who has participated in both SEPA grants, how have you shifted your teaching to include the additional goals of science communication and intergenerational learning?

N/A

How did you use our Tuva drinking water dataset? Did you use the Tuva software for teaching, was it a tool students used to create data visualizations? What about other Tuva data activities? Did you use them in your teaching? Did students build skills using those activities? Please include stories that illustrate students understanding the link between data visualization and literacy and science communication. If you are a teacher who has participated in both SEPA grants, how have you shifted your data literacy focus to include this grant's science communication goal?

So far I have done some Tuva demonstrations for classes to show them what they can do with their data once it is available. My hope is that teachers can find time for students to explore their data, ask questions and

communicate results to others using the platform. I am unsure how this will go this year since it is a new tool for me and the teachers, and I don't know how much time they can devote to it in the classroom.

What challenges did your students have with Tuva, the website, the datasheet, Anecdota, anything related to the project process.

It has been a learning curve for us at GMCG and for our participating schools to learn all the different aspects of the program with multiple websites to check and learn about, and integrating the sample collection, data entry and reporting into our process. I am sure it will get easier as we work the kinks out and teachers become more familiar with the project. It certainly has been a lot to take on for our small non-profit as this is just one of many programs that we do.

Our AmeriCorps member who worked on this project shared: "On the 2nd page of the datasheet there were two questions about filtration that seemed to confuse people. I would suggest changing the wording of the question or removing one of them. For the first filter question I think some people assumed it was asking if they used a Brita filter or one that attaches to the sink, not part of the water system as a whole. I would add further clarification on the definition of filter."

If you did not use Tuva this year, how did you analyze drinking water data? Please explain why you did not use Tuva. What challenges and successes did students experience with your chosen data analysis/visualization tool?

We used Google Sheets and MS Excel to analyze data collected on testing days in the classroom, and Tuva for the heavy metals data once it was available from the lab. We used Tuva in-house to create graphs for our newsletter articles and presentations to the students where we also did some live Tuva demonstrations. It remains to be seen how much the upper level classes will use Tuva as we have not yet reached that part of the program yet.

How did you enhance *your own* Data Visualization and Science Communication skills, as an educator or scientist partner?

We are used to analyzing data and presenting it to students and teachers as part of GET WET!, but using Tuva this year as part of the program opened up some new possibilities to compare data across schools and towns and get a more regional perspective of water quality issues to share with students. I hope to get teachers excited to use the program with their students in the coming weeks as I think it's a valuable tool for creating graphs quickly and communicating results to people in a meaningful way, as well as building data literacy with students.

Science Communication Outreach

What kinds of science communication outreach products did your students produce?

Students at FES created posters and are doing some water-themed poetry on 3/25/2026 to share with their school and the greater community. I am unsure what our two other schools will do for outreach at this time as we have yet to finish programs or receive data from the lab.

Did your students work with the Science Communication Toolkit this year? Yes ☒ No ☐

If yes, please describe how it went. What worked best? What improvements could be made?

I shared ideas with students and teachers from the toolkit at our post visits. We still have four more post visits to do in one of our schools. I am working to facilitate some outreach activities currently with two of the schools.

Please include anecdotes or stories here. If you did not use the Science Communication Toolkit, why not?

What other resources and activities did you use to teach or facilitate science communication? Did the science communication skill building inspire outreach or build capacity in your students in ways not directly associated with the SEPA project?

We are currently working on this aspect of the project. We will use presentations of the data, demo's using Tuva, and share ideas for community outreach with students to encourage them to share their results and learnings with caregivers and their community.

Don't forget to add all final student products to your teacher folder on the shared google folder! (Feel free to add additional products that led to the final products. Simply create a separate folder under your teacher folder.)

Intergenerational Learning

Did you send an intergenerational activity home to parents? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please describe the activity. What are stories and anecdotes you can include about student participation in intergenerational learning activities?

See photos below

If no, please describe why. What other resources or activities did you use to teach about or facilitate intergenerational learning?

We trained community volunteers, AmeriCorps members and staff to help lead hands-on water testing in the classroom as part of our GET WET! Program and shared information with teachers, parents and the general public in handouts, fact sheets, articles and programs.

What worked best? What improvements could be made?

Students, volunteers, staff and AmeriCorps members all enjoyed working together to perform the water tests during testing day. Retired teachers and chemists enjoy sharing their passion for science and working with kids, and students enjoy performing the hands-on experiments, more personalized attention and learning, and meaningful I hope to do more presenting with the students and teachers of the results to parents/caregivers/community members to share about the project and what they learned as well as answer any questions or concerns, perhaps with Amy Hudnor from NH DES, too.

Did the intergenerational activity go home at the same time as the drinking water samples? Yes ☐ No ☒
Please explain.

What feedback did you hear about the activity? N/A

Solutionaries Framework

Did you use the Solutionaries Framework in your class? Yes ☐ No ☒

If yes, please describe.

What worked best? What improvements could be made?

If no, why not? Please include other activities or resources you used to teach about or facilitate systems thinking, place-based discovery, or project-based learning.
See links and information above about GET WET! program

Did you attend the Institute for Humane Education series on the solutionaries framework in your class?
Yes ☐ No ☒

Which aspects of this Communicating Data project will you repeat next year?
Everything we did this year we will repeat next year, and possibly add some community outreach programs about the results.

Which aspects of this project will you change next year?
We will apply for additional funding to supply Zero Water pitchers ahead of time for families in need, and have a process laid out by which they can apply for one. I will be better able to share the Tuva platform and outreach ideas with teachers earlier on in our program, at the community outreach program, and volunteer and AmeriCorps training.

List and describe the resources that helped your students the most this year.
TBD – we are still working with classrooms on Tuva/data analysis and outreach at this time, but they have enjoyed learning in-person from volunteers, staff and AmeriCorps members, as well as our scientist partner.

Provide a list, and links, if applicable, to specific curricular items such as online worksheets, articles, books, YouTube videos, and labs.
See links above.

Add addendums such as stories and anecdotes, photos, student assessments, testimonials from parents/students, etc.
See the end of this document

What were gaps or barriers you experienced this year?
It was a learning curve for me to understand all of the requirements of the projects and how to incorporate various aspects of the project into our GET WET! Program and share these elements with teachers. I will be better prepared next year and teachers will also have a better sense of how the program goes, too.

What are the anticipated needs for the 2025-2026 school year?

-Funding to keep the program going with supplies, materials, testing kits, but also to help fund staff time, AmeriCorps members, mileage expenses for driving to schools, etc.

-Zero Water pitchers on hand for families in need

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GMCG partners with MDI Biological Laboratory, NHDES to offer toxic metals testing and drinking water safety education in local schools

E F F I N G H A M — GMCG is adding toxic metals education and testing to its drinking water program, GET WET! (Groundwater Education Through Water Evaluation and Testing), in area schools this year. GMCG has been leading the citizen science GET WET! program in local schools and libraries since 2009. The addition of toxic metals testing is made possible through the Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA) project, "All About Arsenic+: Communicating Data."

This collaborative public health project was initiated in 2015 by research-

ers at Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory (MDIBL) and Dartmouth College's Toxic Metals Superfund Research Program and is currently funded through the National Institute of Nursing Research and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. Since 2019, the project has engaged 41 schools and 5,200 students, and connected 45 teachers with 22 Scientist Partners.

The project aims to engage teachers and students across Maine and New Hampshire in collecting drinking water from both public and private systems with a focus on multiple

toxic metals, including arsenic, uranium, manganese, and lead. Nearly half of all Maine and New Hampshire households depend on private wells for drinking water. Private wells are not regulated, so it is up to the homeowner to routinely test their well water for possible contaminants. Due to the unique geology of Maine and New Hampshire, wells are often contaminated with toxic metals that are naturally found in the bedrock.

"It's so important for households on private wells to test their water regularly," says Amy Hudnor, Private Well Coordinator for the Drinking

Water & Groundwater Bureau at NH Department of Environmental Services. "When you're using a private well, you don't have the benefits of those using public water system, where trained water operators are testing the water frequently and removing any contaminants found above health limits. NHDES is excited to be involved in this partnership in which private well testing is brought to the classrooms, empowering youth with the knowledge and experience to learn the common naturally occurring well water contaminants such as arsenic, and those common in household plumbing

such as lead. Students are able to test their own well water and learn how to communicate that information to their parents and the wider community. It's a natural fit to include well water testing into subjects like chemistry, biology and environmental science, bringing these topics home to the students in a way that's very tangible."

FMI about All About Arsenic+, visit www.allaboutarsenic.org. More information about this project and GMCG's GET WET! program can be found on GMCG's website, www.gmcg.org, and the public is invited to learn more at upcoming programs, both online and in person, listed on the Web site.



SCHWARTZBERG LAW
EXPERIENCE THAT MATTERS

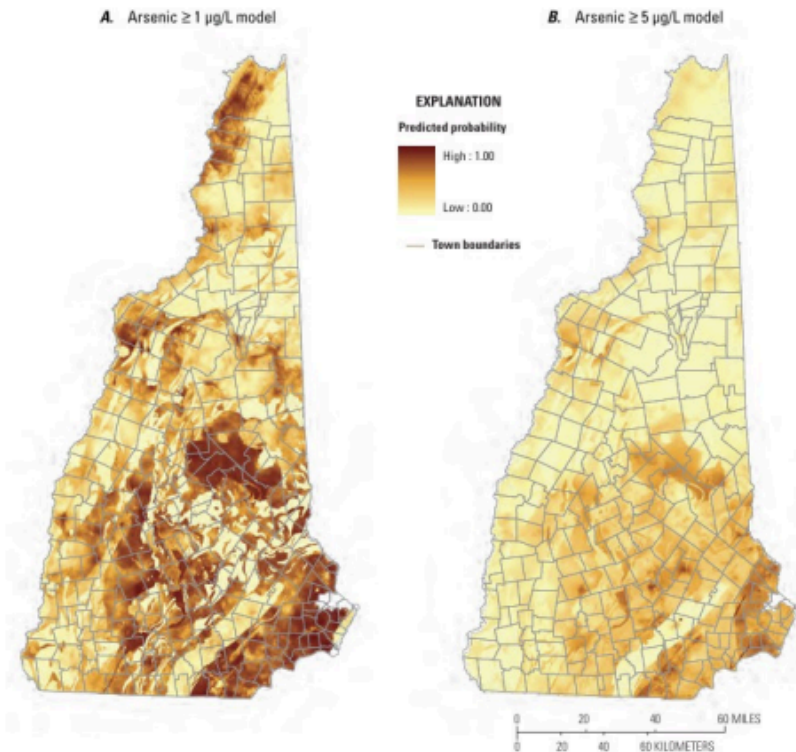
*We provide the tools to pass on
your property
and your wisdom
to the ones you love.*

How local geology affects the quality of your drinking water

by Mackenzie Sirrine, AmeriCorps Member Education & Outreach Assistant

Testing your drinking water on a regular basis is an important, and often overlooked part of home maintenance and can play a major role in staying healthy. But did you know that the quality of your drinking water can be affected by the land around you? Knowing a bit about the land around where you live can help to identify which water quality parameters you should pay special attention to when testing your water. Two of the most important parameters to keep an eye on in New Hampshire are radon and arsenic. These substances are colorless, odorless, and tasteless, leaving water testing the only real way to detect them. While it is true that certain human activities can have an effect on our land, in the case of radon and arsenic, the culprit is our own geology.

People in northeastern NH are more likely to find elevated levels of radon in their drinking water than neighbors in other counties. But why is this? Radon is a gas that, over time, is released from the natural breakdown of uranium in the ground. When this process occurs above ground, the radon is released directly into the atmosphere, and is generally unproblematic for our rivers, lakes, and streams. When radon is released in underground areas, however, the gas gets trapped and, with nowhere else to go, will dissolve into water sources such as aquifers. This is more likely to occur in the northeastern areas of NH due to the high prevalence of granite in the bedrock, which is known to contain trace amounts of radioactive elements with the capability to decay into radon. Roughly 80% of homes in northeastern NH get their drinking water from underground wells, thus running the risk of bringing radon-infused water into their homes. Through a running tap, this radon evaporates into the air of



Maps depicting the predicted probability of arsenic concentrations in groundwater with concentrations above 1 ppb shown on the left and concentrations above the NHDES limit of 5 ppb on the right. Image credit: USGS.

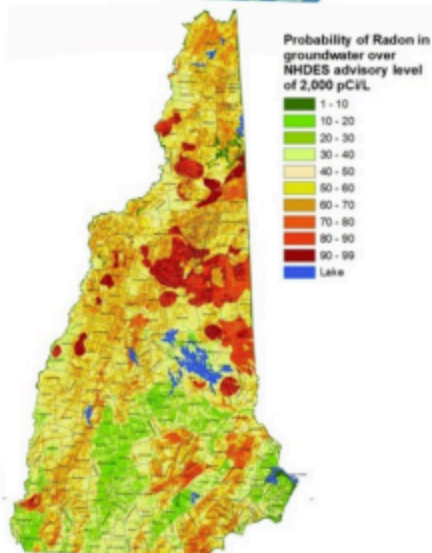
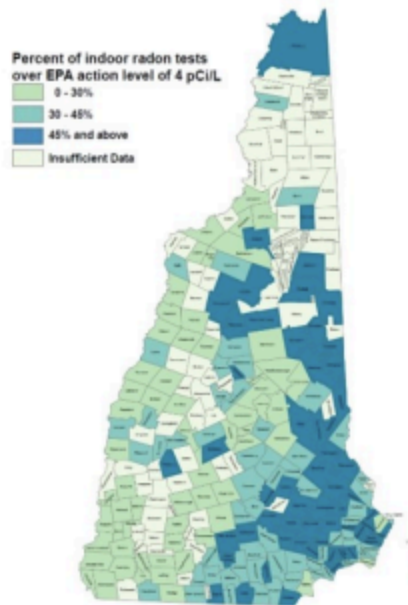
your home, and breathing it in can cause serious health complications to the lungs and respiratory system.

Another common water contaminant found in New Hampshire is arsenic. Similar to how radon is naturally released into the environment, arsenic can enter drinking water sources slowly through the weathering and breakdown of rock formations. Southeastern NH is especially susceptible to elevated arsenic levels due to the chemical makeup of the local bedrock, with about 20% of tested wells showing arsenic concentrations over the healthy limit, making them more susceptible to circulatory system issues, including liver and kidney problems. Recognizing the severity of this issue, NH has become one of the only states to set a limit on the maximum level of arsenic allowed in drinking water to a value lower than the national limit

set by the EPA. In 2019, NHDES set its own standard of 5 ppb (parts per billion), as opposed to the higher federal limit of 10 ppb.

Knowing that these two parameters are ones that are capable of easily contaminating our drinking water, GMCG has initiated two corresponding programs in the watershed. Since 2023, GMCG has partnered with eight local libraries to create a free radon testing kit that anyone can take home and return, just like borrowing a book! To see if your local library has a testing kit available for checkout, visit radonlibrary.com, or you can order one straight from NHDHHS.

New to the lineup of programs this year, GMCG was recently accepted into the "Communicating Data - All About Arsenic" program. This program is a collaboration between NHDES, Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory, and Dartmouth Cancer Center, with the goal to expand the Science



Maps depicting the predicted percentage of homes with indoor radon levels above the EPA limit of 4 pCi/L (top) and the predicted likelihood of groundwater with radon levels above the NHDES limit of 2,000 pCi/L (bottom) Image credit: NHDES.

Education Partnership Award (SEPA). For the next three years, GMCG will be incorporating arsenic testing and education into the GET WET! drinking water quality testing program to help provide knowledge and resources to students and their families at home.

Citations

1- Ayotte, J.D., Cahillane, Matthew, Hayes, Laura, and Robinson, K.W., 2012, Estimated probability of arsenic in groundwater from bedrock aquifers in New Hampshire, 2011: U.S. Geological Survey Scientific Investigations Report 2012-5156, 25 p., at pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2012/5156/

2- NHDES, 2025, New Hampshire Radon Program Offers Free Radon Test Kits. <https://www.des.nh.gov/news-and-media/blog/new-hampshire-radon-program-offers-free-radon-test-kits>

GMCG partners with MDI Biological Laboratory, Dartmouth College and New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services to offer toxic metals testing and drinking water safety education in local schools

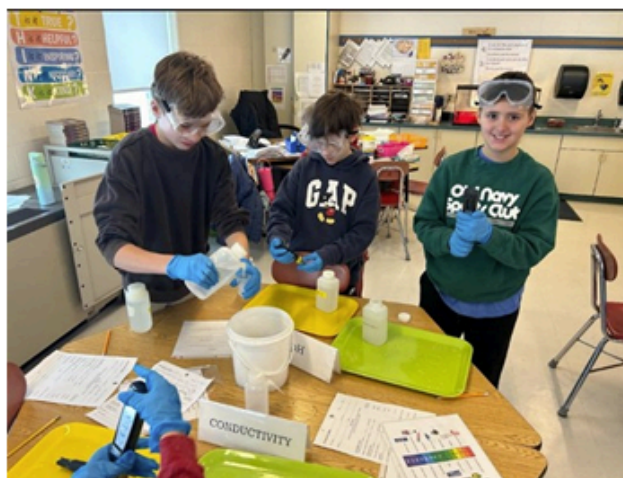
by Tara Schroeder
GMCG Education Coordinator

This winter, GMCG added toxic metals education and testing to its drinking water program, GET WET! (Groundwater Education Through Water Evaluation and Testing), in area schools. GMCG has led the citizen science GET WET! program in local schools and libraries since 2009. The addition of toxic metals testing is made possible through the Science Education Partnership Award project, "All About Arsenic+: Communicating Data." The collaborative public health initiative was launched in 2015 by researchers at Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory and Dartmouth College's Toxic Metals Superfund Research Program and is funded through the National Institute of Nursing Research and the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services. Since 2019, the project has engaged 41 schools and 5,200 students, connecting 45 teachers with 22 scientist partners.

The project engages teachers and students across Maine and New Hampshire in collecting drinking water samples from both public systems and private wells, with a focus on toxic metals including arsenic, uranium, manganese and lead. Nearly half of households in Maine and New Hampshire rely on private wells, which are not regulated, leaving it up to homeowners to test their water regularly. Because of the region's unique geology, wells can contain naturally occurring toxic metals that may pose health risks ranging from impacts on infant and childhood development to increased risk of heart and lung disease and certain cancers.

"It is so important for households on private wells to test their water regularly," said Amy Hudnor, Private Well Coordinator for the Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau at the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and GMCG's scientist partner for the project. "NHDES is excited to be involved in this partnership in which private well testing is brought into the classroom, empowering youth to learn about common contaminants such as arsenic and lead while testing their own well water and sharing that information with their families and communities."

In 2025, GMCG Education Coordinator Tara Schroeder brought the program to local communities after training with Dr. Jane Disney and her team at Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory and forming a partnership with Hudnor. The three-year project will engage hundreds of students and their families in drinking water

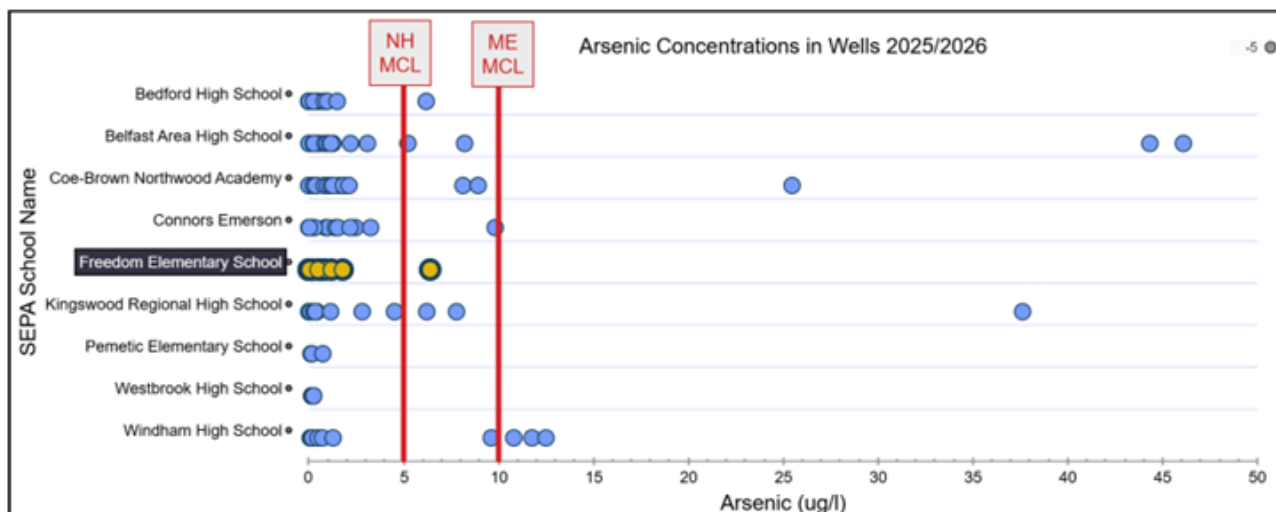


Students from Freedom Elementary School test their well water in class and through Dartmouth College's lab for 30 parameters—including toxic metals like arsenic, uranium, and lead—as part of GMCG's GET WET! program and the All About Arsenic project. Each winter, GMCG trains teachers and volunteers (like Anne Packard, pictured above) to participate.

education while providing valuable information about the safety of their well water through GMCG's GET WET! program.

"We know there is potential for elevated levels of some toxic metals in our region based on past groundwater studies and state testing data," Schroeder said. "Testing can also be costly for families. Through this program, we can provide important information while helping families better understand and ensure the safety of their drinking water."

For more information about the All About Arsenic+ project, visit www.allaboutarsenic.org. Learn more about this project and GMCG's GET WET! program at www.gmcg.org.



Graph: Arsenic concentrations in drinking water samples from schools in New Hampshire and Maine (2025–2026), including Freedom Elementary School. Each blue dot represents an individual measurement (µg/L). Students participating in the All About Arsenic Project have used their data to advocate for stronger Maine standards and for \$400,000 in one-time grants to help homeowners and landlords with contaminated private wells.

Support Safe Drinking Water in Our Communities

by Tara Schroeder
GMCG Education Coordinator

Would you like to make a difference in your community and help support drinking water safety and education?

GMCG is helping students understand drinking water—where it comes from, why it’s important to test for contaminants, and how to protect it for future generations. Through our GET WET! (Groundwater Education Through Water Evaluation and Testing) program and the All About Arsenic project, students participate in hands-on science by testing their drinking water in the classroom. These activities are guided by trained staff, AmeriCorps members, and community volunteers, and are affiliated with the University of Maine, Dartmouth College, and Mount Desert Island Biological Laboratory.

Students can test their drinking water at home for 30 different parameters, including potentially toxic heavy metals such as lead, arsenic, and uranium. The data collected through the program contributes to an important long-term record of groundwater health in our region, helping communities better understand and respond to changes in local water quality.

We are seeking sponsors to help underwrite the costs of this educational program including water testing and to provide ZeroWater pitchers for households whose test

results show elevated levels of contaminants.

Your sponsorship can make a meaningful difference for a family in need by providing a ZeroWater pitcher, which can remove contaminants such as lead, arsenic, uranium, and other heavy metals, helping ensure safer drinking water at home.

Contact Nancy Ritger at director@gmcg.org for more information on how to sponsor this program.



Photo: A ZeroWater Pitcher uses a multi-stage filtration system to reduce contaminants such as lead, arsenic and uranium in household drinking water. The pitchers will be provided to families in need whose water tests show elevated levels of heavy metals.

Here are some photos from the testing days: (Please do not share as they include minors, and I will need to get permission if you would like to use any of these, thank you!)



