

Help Wanted

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In past articles I have explained about the equipment NeRWA has purchased with funds received from an educational grant from the EPA. Several systems and organizations have borrowed the groundwater models to demonstrate the flow of groundwater and the potential for contamination. There have been a couple of well testing events to test for nitrates in domestic, irrigation and stock wells. One system has borrowed the GPS units to complete a contaminant source inventory for their well field, and we used them at the EXPO last summer in a location exercise. I would really like to see this equipment used as much as possible so that its usefulness to water systems in the state could be cited as an example in the event further grant funds are solicited for similar projects.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask the water operators in the state for a big favor. I have visited with schools and other organizations around the state in the course of my work, but there are many that I have not had a chance to reach. I would like to see the water operators in the state visit with the schools, Future Farmers of America (FFA) Chapters, 4-H Clubs and other organizations in their area to notify them of the availability of this equipment.

The groundwater models are an excellent way to introduce young students to the concept of where their drinking water comes from and how it can become polluted. There are several different demonstrations that can be given to show groundwater flow, point source pollution, non-point source pollution and the effects of over pumping an aquifer. I would be more than happy to deliver the model to the teacher or organization and either show them how to demonstrate these principals, or even perform the demonstrations myself, if time permits.

In areas of the state where nitrate is a concern, a test-your-well event could be a useful tool to educate local citizens on the quality of their water while conducting a nice public service for them at the same time. NeRWA has three nitrate test kits, and the tests are simple to perform and take about seven or eight minutes to complete. There are written instructions that are simple to follow, and again, I would be willing to deliver the test equipment and go over the testing procedures. In the event a result comes back near or over the ten parts per million limit, the card given to the well owner that shows the results of the test also includes contact information for me as well as a suggestion to have a certified lab test the water to determine the exact nitrate levels.

Systems interested in completing wellhead protection plans can use the GPS equipment to complete a contaminant source inventory within the designated wellhead protection area. When this is completed, NeRWA could take the resulting data and plot it on aerial photographs of the wellhead protection area to show the locations of the potential contaminants located. Groups could also use these units to complete "scavenger hunts", which are useful in becoming familiar with the equipment and the concept of Global

Positioning Systems. NeRWA received three GPS units from EPA grant funds, and we also have two other units available.

This equipment is very useful in educating the public on matters concerning water availability and quality, and by working with groups and organizations in your area, water operators can complete a good education program while having others perform the actual educational exercises. Please visit with the schools and student groups in your area to see if they would be interested in taking advantage of these opportunities. If there is an interest in any of this equipment, just call the office and leave a message and I will get back to you and set up a time to visit with the interested parties and demonstrate what is available. Thank you in advance.