

## **EARTH DAY, ECO FAIRS AND SAFE DRINKING WATER THROUGH WELLHEAD PROTECTION**

**By Mike Lucas**

**On April 21<sup>st</sup>, 456 fifth grade students attended the annual ECO Fair event at the Fremont City Auditorium. The young citizen environmentalists circulated through the numerous displays in groups of from 2 or 3 up to 6 and 7 learning about everything from the benefits of recycling and proper trash disposal to endangered species in Nebraska.**

**The Nebraska Rural Water Association participated again this year as it has in the past. NeRWA has groundwater modeling displays that provide visual representations of the geological structure of various types of aquifers. Contaminants (water with food coloring added for dramatic effect) were added to a lake or point sources such as improperly abandoned wells and simulated spills. The future hydrologists were able to witness the “bad stuff” percolate down to the aquifer. Then as they operated a simulated well they observed the plumes of pollution migrate to the well screen, up the well and through a clear tube (city water main) to their drinking water glass (gross!!!). Pumping the well was an extremely popular activity for the many observers requiring the groundwater aquifer to be recharged frequently (with buckets) to resupply the artesian well to the lake and keep the city well from pumping air and of course avoiding loss of system pressure, backflow situations, disinfection and reporting requirements etc.**

**A good time was had by all. Those involved in organizing the event certainly deserve a lot of credit and a great big Thank You for their caring and unselfish efforts for today and for the future!**

**The NeRWA road show is scheduled to reappear in Falls City on April 30 and is available for an event near you. Contact Salli at the Nebraska Rural Water Association (402)443-5216 or (800)842-8039.**