

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Serving Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma,
New Mexico, Texas and 66 Tribes

Helping Kids Learn in a Pollution Free Environment

25th Anniversary of the Children's Environmental Health Program!

EPA is celebrating the 25th anniversary of our Children's Health Program. Children's environmental health refers to the effect of environmental exposure during early life: from conception, infancy, early childhood, and adolescence until 21 years of age.

On April 21, 1997, the president signed an

Executive Order requiring all federal agencies to assign a high priority to addressing health and safety risks to children, coordinate research priorities on children's health, and ensure that their standards take into account special risks to children. In May 1997, EPA established the Office of Children's Health Protection, whose mission

is to make the environmental health protection of children a fundamental goal of public health and environmental protection in the United States and around the world.

Join EPA in celebrating this milestone anniversary with a focus on children's environmental health this spring! Check out our

resources for the classroom below!



The Earth Day 2022 theme is "Invest In Our Planet." What will you do?

Every year on April 22, Earth Day marks the anniversary of the birth of the modern environmental movement in 1970. In the decades leading up to the first Earth Day, Americans were consuming vast amounts of leaded gas through massive and inefficient automobiles. Industry belched out smoke and sludge with little fear of the consequences from either the law or bad press. Air pollution was commonly accepted as the smell of prosperity. Until this point, mainstream America

remained largely oblivious to environmental concerns and how a polluted environment threatens human health.

However, the stage was set for change with the publication of Rachel Carson's New York Times bestseller *Silent Spring* in 1962. The book represented a watershed moment, selling more than 500,000 copies in 24 countries as it raised public awareness and concern for living organisms, the environment and the inextricable links between pollution and public health.

Earth Day 1970 would come to provide a voice to this emerging environmental consciousness and put environmental concerns on the front page.

Groups that had been fighting individually against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness and the extinction of wildlife united on Earth Day around these shared common values. Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, urban dwellers and farmers, business and labor leaders. By the end of 1970, the first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of other first of their kind environmental laws, including the National

Environmental Policy Act, the Occupational Safety and Health Act, and the Clean Air Act. Two years later Congress passed the Clean Water Act. A year after that, Congress passed the Endangered Species Act and soon after the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act. These laws have protected millions of men, women and children from disease and death and have protected hundreds of species from extinction.

We invite you to be a part of Earth Day and help write many more chapters—struggles and victories—into the Earth Day book.

April 22 Is Earth Day! Do You Know the history?

Learning Links—National Environmental Education Week—2022 and Beyond



Environmental education increases public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues or problems. In doing so, it provides the public with the necessary skills to make informed decisions and take responsible action.



For more than 16 years, the National Environmental Education Foundation brought Environmental Education (EE) Week to life with events, projects, resources, and stories that help inform and celebrate the critical work educators are doing across the country to instill a passion for science and the environment in their students.

However, just as the COVID-19 pandemic led

education outside of the classroom, now is the time to move environmental education beyond EE Week.

Instead of packing all educational resources and events into a handful of days in late April, EE materials will be offered throughout the year.

This means more high-quality materials can be shared and will align EE offerings with a traditional school year schedule—making it more intuitive for

educators to incorporate environmental education into their lesson plans.

We hope you find this new direction in environmental education exciting.

Sign up for environmental education resources at the National Environmental Education Foundation at <https://www.neefusa.org/education/eeweek>.



Notes for Nurses—May is Asthma Awareness Month

May is Asthma Awareness Month—a time to educate friends, family, and patients about asthma and promote awareness about how this serious, sometimes life-threatening, chronic respiratory disease can be controlled.

During Asthma Awareness Month, EPA provides ready-to-use tools and resources for promoting asthma awareness in your community.

We are continuing to promote Asthma Awareness Month on asthmacommunitynetwork.org.

asthmacommunitynetwork.org. Encourage your stakeholders to list any outreach activities or virtual events on the network in the Event Listings section.

Social Media content will be posted throughout the month on EPA's Facebook and Twitter accounts.

The Four Rules of Waste Reduction



Custodian's Closet—Waste Reduction in Schools

- **Reduce**—Purchasing, consuming, and throwing away less. Source reduction actually prevents the generation of waste in the first place, making it the most preferred method of waste management.
- **Reuse**—Reusing items by repairing, donating, or selling them. Reuse is even better than recycling because items do not have to be reprocessed before they can be used again.
- **Recycle**—A series of activities that includes collecting recyclable materials that would otherwise be considered waste, sorting and processing recyclables into raw materials such as fibers, and manufacturing the raw materials into new products. Recycling prevents the need to harvest new raw materials from the Earth.
- **Buy Recycled**—Purchasing products made of recycled materials.

Preventing waste and recycling can decrease disposal costs. Schools might be able to bring in additional revenue by selling recyclables that have financial value.

March 7-11 Is National Groundwater Awareness Week

The Water Cycle

National Groundwater awareness week is aimed at increasing knowledge of the importance of groundwater in society. It is currently estimated that 771 million people live without access to clean water. This amounts to nearly 1 in 10 people worldwide, or twice the population of the United States. Easier access to clean water means improved education, income, and health – especially for women and kids. Contamination of groundwater, among other factors, is responsible for the lack of access to clean

water that many people face in today's world.

It is a common myth that contaminating one source of water will not affect other sources. This is not the case, due to the hydrologic cycle. Water is always on the move! It evaporates, condenses, and precipitates back to the Earth. Pollution in one body of water can lead to contamination in other water bodies. There are many possible changes that water can go through during this continuous cycle, and it is our responsibility to ensure

water does not get contaminated whenever possible.

Protecting sources of groundwater is up to you! There are three steps to follow when considering protecting sources of groundwater:

Be aware. Do you know where the tap water in your house comes from? Is it groundwater or surface water? What body of water does it come from? Are there potential sources of contamination located nearby?

Be mindful. Household pollutants can lead to groundwater contamination. Consider using less of these chemicals and purchasing more environmentally friendly products to limit potential groundwater contamination.

Use Less. Track what the main sources of water are in your household and change your habits accordingly. There are many water conservation practices recommended by the Texas Water Development Board: <https://www.twdb.texas.gov/conservation/index.asp>.

May 2-8 Is Air Quality Awareness Week—What is AirNow?

AirNow is your one-stop source for air quality data. The recently redesigned site highlights air quality in your local area first, while still providing air quality information at state, national, and world views. A new interactive map even lets you zoom out to get the big picture or drill down to see data for a single air quality monitor.

AirNow reports air quality using the official U.S. [Air Quality Index \(AQI\)](#), a color-coded index designed to communicate whether air quality is healthy or unhealthy for you. When you know the AQI in your area, you can take steps to protect your health. AirNow is a partnership of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Park Service, NASA, Centers for Disease Control, and tribal, state, and local air quality agencies. [Complete list of AirNow partners.](#)

May 1-7 Is Drinking Water Week

For the past 40 years the American Water Works Association and its partners have used Drinking Water Week as an opportunity for both water professionals and communities to recognize the vital role that drinking water plays in our daily lives.

The United States enjoys one of the world's most reliable and safest supplies of drinking water. Congress passed the Safe Drinking Water Act in 1974. The water you drink starts from a source. The

sources are rivers, streams, lakes, reservoirs, springs, and groundwater that provide water to public drinking water supplies and private wells. Protecting source water can reduce risks by preventing exposures to contaminated water. Public water systems are responsible for meeting the requirements set by the EPA and state drinking water programs under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Protecting source water from contamination helps reduce treatment costs and may avoid or defer the

need for complex treatment at the water system facility before the water is distributed to the community.

About 150,000 public water systems provide drinking water to most Americans. Customers that are served by a public water system can contact their local water supplier and ask for information on contaminants in their drinking water and are encouraged to request a copy of their Consumer Confidence Report. This report lists the levels of

contaminants that have been detected in the water, including those by EPA, and whether the system meets state and EPA drinking water standards. The EPA sets legal limits on more than 90 contaminants in drinking water. The legal limit for a contaminant reflects the level that protects human health and that water systems can achieve using the best available technology.

How does your
**WATER SYSTEM
WORK?**

EPA Region 6— South Central

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Protecting human health and the
environment.



HELPFUL HINT: Click on the
pictures or logos for more
information!

[Sustainable Management of Food, Disposal of Batteries, Electronics, and Electronic Appliances and Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs:](#)
Stephen Sturdivant, sturdivant.stephen@epa.gov, 214-665-6673

[Recycling and Reuse:](#) Deanna Debose, debose.deanna@epa.gov, 214-665-6461

[Safer Choice, Pollution Prevention, and Sustainable Materials Management:](#) Melanie Lillard, lillard.melanie@epa.gov, 214-665-7588

[Lead Based Paint:](#) Mikeal Adams, adams.mikeal@epa.gov, 214-665-6711

[Integrated Pest Management:](#) Ken McPherson,
mcperson.kenneth@epa.gov, 214-665-6754

[Pollution Prevention and Source Reduction Assistance Grant Programs:](#), Stephanie Cheaney, Cheaney.stephanie@epa.gov, 214-665-8057

[Radon, Asbestos, and Indoor Air Quality:](#) George Brozowski,
brozowski.george@epa.gov, 214-665-8541

[Ground Water:](#) Scott Ellinger, ellinger.scott@epa.gov, 214-665-8408

[Drinking Water:](#) Angela Restivo, restivo.angela@epa.gov, 214-665-7123

[Trash Free Waters:](#) Rachel Renz and Renee Bellew,
renz.rachel@epa.gov and bellew.renee@epa.gov, 214-665-3129 and 214-665-2793, respectively.



ODDS AND ENDS

Upcoming Newsletters

In our next issue, the Region 6 Healthy Schools Newsletter in June 2022 will highlight the following:

Contact

- Home Safety Month,
- Water Sense Challenge Month, and

Disclaimer

- Indoor Air Quality Awareness Week.

Feedback

Other topics will include National Oceans Week, Sunwise and Extreme Heat, and Research for a Healthy Environment Month in addition to the quarterly columns on Notes for Nurses, Custodian's Closet, and Learning Links. Healthy Schools is published by the U.S. Environmental

Protection Agency Region 6 - South Central in Dallas, Texas. Region 6 includes the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as well as 66 Tribes. For general information about Healthy Schools, to provide feedback on this newsletter, or to be added or removed from the distribution list, please contact Cathy Gilmore, Senior Environmental Employee (SEE) for Healthy Schools at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov

We would love your Feedback on this newsletter or suggestions for future topics. Please email EPA at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov.

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Southwest Center for Pediatric Environmental Health

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
EL PASO

Disaster Recovery Workshop

The Southwest Center for Pediatric Environmental Health (SWCPEH) and the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Department of Emergency Medicine is proud to sponsor a Disaster Recovery Workshop. This educational workshop will take place virtually via WebEx with the date and times specified below. This workshop is for parents, teachers, health care providers, community members and anyone interested in pediatric environmental health. A certificate of attendance will be given to every registered participant who attends the entire workshop.

The workshop will cover the following topics:

Wednesday, March 23, 2022

Session 1—9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. MT

Environmental Health Conditions in the Home and School: Hazards Associated with Flooding
Presented by:

Erica Guerrero, PA-C

Session 2—10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. MT

Children's Emotional Health and Natural Disasters
Presented by:

Marisa B Nowitz, MSW, LCSW-S

Session 3—11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. MT

Children's Health Risks Associated with Flooding
Presented by:

Sarah Watkins, DO

Please use the link below to register:

<https://ttuhscep.webex.com/ttuhscep/onstage/g.php?MTID=e679e375cf331ea7d205a412d06186be4>

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Moraima Barron at mobarron@ttuhsc.edu or 915-215-6110.

