

WARNER GROUNDWATER PROTECTION Newsletter

PROTECTING WARNER'S DRINKING WATER FOR OUR FUTURE

WATER SUPPLY AND QUALITY PROTECTION

Did you know?

- ◆ Less than 1% of all water on Earth is available for human consumption.
 - ◆ The average American uses over 80 gallons of water per day.
- EPA WaterSense Program

Drought Conditions Continue

This summer, the NH DES Drought Management Team stated that New Hampshire's water levels are a bit different locally than what is reported on the US Drought Monitoring Site, tending toward drier especially near the Connecticut River watershed. This information was reinforced by an official "drought declaration" for most of the state. New Hampshire has experienced official droughts for most years between 2016-2022, but conditions may be improving by the winter 2022-2023 season.

Did You Know?

We meet monthly. Join us!

WGPC MEETINGS at the Warner Town Hall

- Wed Aug 3 @ 5:00 PM
- Thu Sep 29 @ 6:30 PM
- Wed Oct 19 @ 6:30 PM
- Wed Nov 16 @ 6:30 PM
- **Wed Nov 30 @ 6:30 PM**
- **TUE DEC 13 @ 7:00 PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING**
- Wed Jan 4 @ 5:30 PM
- Thu Feb 9 @ 6:30 PM

Water Users and Water Supply Options During a Drought

When water levels are low, a community or water district could develop and enforce water use restrictions on non-essential water usage such as lawn and landscape watering, pool filling, car washing, and more. Restrictions ("water bans") are more effective on community or municipal water supplies than on private wells. However, encouragement for both well owners and water system users to *voluntarily* undertake these and other water reduction measures during droughts is often well-received and can be very successful.

For homeowners with wells, water efficiency is key – using low-flush toilets, fixing leaking fixtures, taking short showers, doing only full loads of laundry. Be sure to maintain your septic system. But if your well goes dry during a drought, you should seek professional assistance.

The [NH DES Drought Guidance 2020](#) provides information, tips and resources for conserving water.

POTENTIAL CONTAMINATION SOURCES (PCS)

The goal of the NH Groundwater Protection Act is to keep our groundwater quality pure and its quantity high now and for future generations.

New Hampshire statutes under NH RSA 485-C, the Groundwater Protection Act, provide the authority for groundwater protection.

These specific protections include designating groundwater classifications in certain areas, setting water quality standards, regulating large water withdrawals, and identifying groundwater contaminant land uses known as Potential Contaminant Sources (PCSs).

Read up on drought issues and recommendations on the [NHDES Drought Management webpage](#) which contains many fact sheet, notices, and videos on this critical topic.

See the NH DES DWGB-22-1 Groundwater Protection Act RSA 485-C Fact Sheet 2020 at: <https://www.des.nh.gov/sites/g/files/ehbemt341/files/documents/2020-01/dwgb-22-1.pdf>

Warner Groundwater Protection Options

How can Warner's groundwater supply be better protected? Be kept clean? Have its water quantity preserved? Retain its stratified drift aquifers?

There are several options our community can consider. Warner has many of these regulations in place for other uses, but not specifically for groundwater protection. We could consider enhancing our existing regulations and/or adopting new:

- **Zoning Ordinance** regulations to apply a Groundwater or Aquifer Protection District Overlay, setbacks, buffers;
- **Conditional Use Permit** for new PCSs (local permission from the Zoning Ordinance);
- **State-Mandated Best Management Practices (BMPs)** including NH Environmental Administrative Rules Env-Wq-401 BMPs for Groundwater Protection;
- **Innovative Land Use Controls** performance standards within NH RSA 674 (Planning & Land Use);
- **Subdivision and Site Plan Review Regulations** (issues like landscaping, sedimentation & erosion control, maintenance and inspection);
- **Excavation Regulations** (issues like limiting material removal and ensuring site reclamation);
- **Health Ordinance** regulations (to address lots with excessive junk with potential leaching into groundwater supplies).

In the December 2022 Issue 4 Newsletter, further information will be described regarding potential regulatory options.

Have a question? Want to get involved or learn more first hand? Please come to the WGPC's

Groundwater Protection Public Information Meeting

**Tues Dec 13 @ 7:00 PM
Warner Town Hall
Lower Meeting Room**

Learning About Groundwater Protection at the Fall Foliage Festival



Thank you everyone for stopping by our Warner Groundwater Protection Committee booth at the Warner Fall Foliage Festival! Look for us at upcoming community events through March 2023.

POTENTIAL (GROUNDWATER) CONTAMINATION SOURCES

Vehicle service and repair shops* • General service and repair shops* • Metalworking shops* • Manufacturing facilities* • Underground and aboveground storage tanks • Waste and scrap processing and storage* • Transportation corridors • Septic systems (at commercial and industrial facilities) • Laboratories and certain professional offices (medical, dental, veterinary) * • Use of agricultural chemicals** • Salt storage and use* • Snow dumps • Stormwater infiltration ponds or leaking catch basins • Cleaning services* • Food processing plants* • Fueling and maintenance of earth moving equipment* • Concrete, asphalt, and tar manufacture* • Cemeteries • Hazardous waste facilities*

* PCS categories subject to BMP inspections per NH DES

Existing PCSs must abide by best management practices (BMPs) as enforced by NH DES or a municipality. New PCSs must be approved through available local land use regulations (like the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision, Site Plan or Excavation Regulations), or if none, must fulfill the state requirements.

Read the full RSA 485-C:
<http://gencourt.state.nh.us/rsa/html/L/485-C/485-C-mrg.htm>

Contact the Warner Groundwater Protection Committee (WGPC):

Alice Chamberlin, Chair, email: groundwater@WarnerNH.gov

Groundwater Protection Committee website: <https://WarnerNH.gov/gpc>