

Bulletin

Issue 10 • Spring 2024

for Educators

The Indiana Department of Environmental Management's (IDEM) mission is to protect the environment and human health. IDEM ensures Indiana's land is safe to live on, air is safe to breathe, and water is safe to drink. IDEM's environmental educator is a resource for you!

Featured Program

NexTrex Community Recycling Challenge

Is your school ready to take on a new challenge to become more sustainable and win a prize for it? Your school can win a Trex bench by collecting and recycling at least 1,000 pounds of plastic film in a 12-month period. Trex benches are made from recycled materials, including industrial wood scrap and polyethylene (PE) plastic film from common household items, such as grocery bags, bread bags, bubble wrap, cereal bags, and more. The 12-month period can start at any time.

This is an opportunity for students practice recycling, conceptualize the amount of waste we all generate, and obtain something tangible made from the type of materials they have collected. The Recycling Challenge will allow students to connect the dots between waste, recycling, recycling markets, and products made from recycled materials. Students will experience the benefits of a circular economy while diverting at least 1,000 pounds of plastic film from landfills.



Visit [NexTrex.com](https://www.nextrex.com) to register for the challenge.

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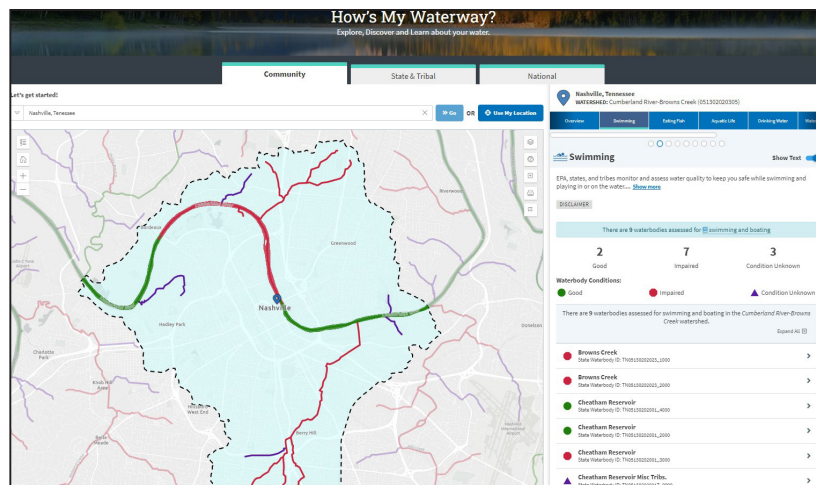
2024 Hoosier Association of Science Teachers, Inc. (HASTI) Conference
February 19–20, 2024

Earth Day Indiana Festival
June 2024

Topics to Share

How's My Waterway?

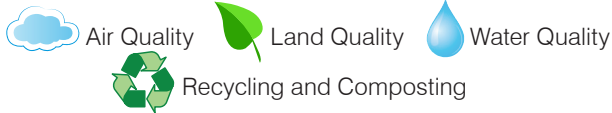
Explore water quality in specific geographic areas with students using the EPA's [How's My Waterway](https://www.epa.gov/hmw) tool and [educator materials](#). You will have access to information about water quality in your local watershed, the conditions for swimming, eating fish, and aquatic life, restoration and protection efforts, lesson plans, and more.



Classroom Presentations

Earth Day Presentations

Earth Day is April 22; however, IDEM celebrates Earth Day the entire month of April. To celebrate, IDEM will be offering free, in-person Earth Day presentations to Indiana elementary school classrooms in April. The hands-on presentations are 30-45 minutes and offer students an opportunity to learn how different environmental systems work. Presentation topics include:



Requests for Earth Day presentations during the month of April will end on February 23, 2024.

To learn more about the programs or to request a classroom presentation, please visit: www.idem.IN.gov/iee

Programs are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Last year, over 12,000 students from 137 Indiana schools participated.

Craft Corner

Plastic Bottle Wind Spiral

Supplies:

- Plastic two-liter bottle
- Acrylic paint or permanent markers
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- String, ribbon, or fishing line

Directions:

1. Remove the cap and let bottle dry out.
2. Remove label from bottle.
3. Cut the bottom and top off the bottle.
4. Using acrylic paint or permanent markers, color the bottles with various colors and designs.
5. Starting at the bottom of the bottle, cut a spiral up and around the bottle until you reach the top.
6. Use hole punch at one end.
7. Tie string, ribbon, or fishing line to hang wind spiral.



Resources

Community Recycling Grant Program

Does your school or organization have an idea for a project that focuses on the education or promotion of recycling, processing of recyclable materials, waste reduction, or composting? There is grant funding for recycling projects available through IDEM's Community Recycling Grant Program. Schools, counties, municipalities, solid waste management districts, and nonprofit organizations in Indiana are eligible to submit a Community Recycling Grant application requesting \$1,000 to \$100,000 in funding.



The next grant round is projected to open late summer 2024.

For eligibility, funding, and match requirements, visit recycle.IN.gov.

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Indiana Department of
Environmental Management