

How do I participate?

You can order an easy-to-use water testing kit from the main website at www.worldwatermonitoringday.org. The kit contains instructions on how to test for four key parameters: dissolved oxygen, water temperature, pH, and water clarity. Select a site for monitoring and monitor your site between September 18 and October 18, 2003. Be sure to follow all the safety instructions included with the kit. Once you've monitored, enter your data in the database. You may also want to check around for fun activities in your area, like water festivals, or for other opportunities to get involved in protecting your local watershed.

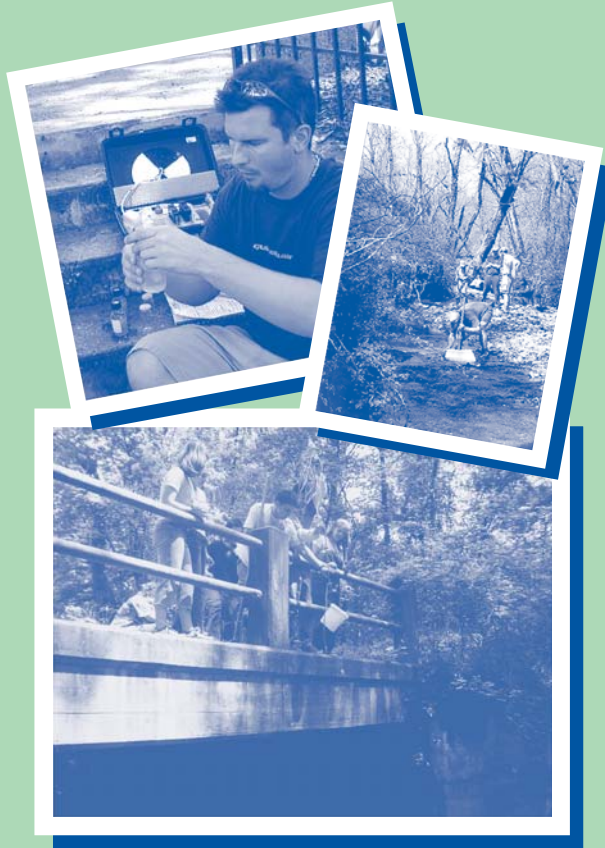


Who is organizing this event?

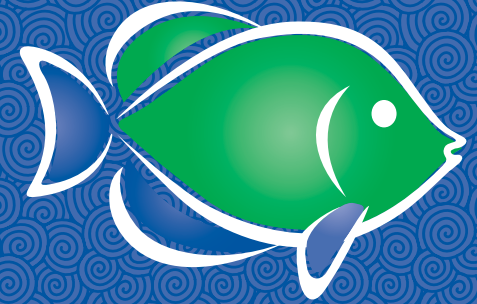
Local monitoring and educational activities will be organized by watershed organizations, schools, government agencies, and individual citizens. Overall, World Water Monitoring Day itself is being planned and coordinated by America's Clean Water Foundation and the International Water Association, in partnership with a number of other organizations including the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

How do I find out more?

Visit www.worldwatermonitoringday.org for more information, to order test kits (international orders and bulk orders accepted), register your site(s), enter your data, and find out what's going on in your area and around the globe. To learn more about volunteer environmental monitoring, visit www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/volunteer.



Photos courtesy of Fairfax County Stream Protection Strategy Team



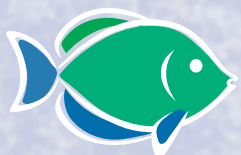
Be Part of Something BIG!

World Water Monitoring Day

October 18, 2003



U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Water
Washington, DC 20460
www.epa.gov/ow
EPA 841-F-03-010



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World Water Monitoring Day!

What is World Water Monitoring Day?

On the first National Water Monitoring Day on October 18, 2002, 75,000 people participated in events held across the U.S. to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Clean Water Act. Recognizing that the need for clean water knows no boundaries, this year we will be going global.

World Water Monitoring Day is an event designed to educate people of all ages, in all nations, about the value of clean water and the role of water quality monitoring. World Water Monitoring Day offers participants an opportunity to use a simple test kit to take water quality samples in their local streams, lakes, bays, or wetlands, enter their data into an international database, and take part in activities that educate us all about our role in protecting clean water. As in 2002, organizations that are already engaged in water quality monitoring are invited to participate using their own equipment and methods. In the U.S. alone, over 830 groups with several hundred thousand volunteers regularly monitor water quality and share their data with their local communities and states.

Why is monitoring important?

We need to monitor in order to answer basic questions about our waters. Can we safely swim in them? Can fish and other aquatic animals live in them? Can we safely eat the fish we catch? Is the quality of our waters improving?

Today we can't always answer these questions. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is working to build partnerships with other federal agencies, states, local governments, watershed groups, the private sector, and the public to improve the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of water monitoring programs.

Citizens can get involved by taking part in World Water Monitoring Day, joining a volunteer monitoring or watershed protection organization, and educating themselves and others about water pollution and what they can do to prevent it.

What will I be Monitoring?

Four basic parameters were chosen for testing on World Water Monitoring Day because of their simplicity and usefulness in screening water for potential problems.

Temperature: Some aquatic animals (e.g. trout, salmon) are sensitive to changes in water temperature and require a certain temperature range to survive and thrive. Temperature affects the amount of oxygen water can hold (cold water holds more oxygen than warm water). Warm water discharged from factories or heated by city streets can be a form of pollution to creatures that are sensitive to temperature.

Dissolved Oxygen (DO): All aquatic animals need oxygen. In water, it exists in dissolved form, known as DO. DO fluctuates naturally, depending on time of day and temperature. Many aquatic organisms are sensitive to fluctuations of DO or low levels of DO. Low levels of DO can result from too many nutrients or organic wastes in water.

pH: pH tells us the acidity or alkalinity of water. Many aquatic organisms are adapted to a specific pH range and can die if it varies. Pollution like acid rain or mine drainage can affect pH.

Turbidity: This is a measure of how clear the water is. Turbid water has suspended matter in it, like silt, bits of plants, or algae. If water is too turbid, it can keep sunlight from reaching aquatic plants. Too much suspended matter in the water can smother fish eggs and the streambed where aquatic bugs live. Erosion and runoff from farms and construction sites can increase turbidity.