



York students to learn about impact of water pollution with Enviroscape models

Mount Agamenticus Conservation Coordinator Robin Kerr pours water into a model that shows the flow of water, in a demonstration given to teachers, town officials and others at the York Superintendent's Office, Thursday, March 13. Susan Morse photo

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YORK, Maine — York School District teachers Thursday got their first look at Enviroscape, a model for showing how liquid dropped in one area of town trickles down to ponds and waterways at the other end.

Mount Agamenticus Conservation Coordinator Robin Kerr poured first clear, and then colored, water onto the upper end of an Enviroscape model built by a company of the same name in Virginia. The clear water in a pond at the lower end of the model turned murky.

The message was clear and it is one the York Water District Superintendent Don Neumann wants students to see firsthand. He and York Sewer District Superintendent Tim Haskell donated two Enviroscape models to the school district, and a third to the Mount Agamenticus Conservation Region.

Karen Young of the Mount Agamenticus to the Sea Conservation Initiative said the Enviroscape idea involved that entity and the water and sewer districts, the school and the town, through Stormwater Manager and Shoreland Resource Officer Leslie Hinz, who was in attendance Thursday.

"We've been talking about this for a while," Neumann said Thursday. "Pollutants end up in the water supply (at Chases Pond)."

The water district is enforcing a leash law for dogs on its watershed land in the Mount Agamenticus area. Dogs are mandated to be on a leash to prevent them from wandering off to do their business in the woods, beyond the view of their owners. Dog owners are supposed to carry out dog waste in a plastic bag.

Resource Protection Officer Gary Stevens has issued at least four summonses, which can come with a \$100 fine, to pet owners who he said have knowingly ignored the law.

Neumann said, "That water flows into Chases Pond and the Cape Neddick River. What shows up in the watershed eventually shows up in the water supply."

The estimated 10 teachers in attendance all said they would use the models, depending on which grade level is the most appropriate for the topic. The school district is in the process of realigning its science curriculum to Next Generation standards.

"These are great, easy to understand," said York High School biology teacher Bill Walsh.

Kindergarten teacher Betsy Pattison said, "We do a unit on water, we're hoping to incorporate it."

The models also help with a school initiative, according to Curriculum Coordinator Barbara Maling, who said, "We're looking for ways for students to be engaged, to connect to the school and the town."

Teachers who got a look at the Enviroscope models included Julie Twomey, Grade 1; Tracy Pepin, Grade 3; Pam Audet, Grade 2; Margot Simonds, Grade 7; Michael Harris, Grade 4; and Pam Whelan-Roy, kindergarten.

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