



New Training from the Montana Water Center

The Virtual System Explorer 2006, a new training program developed by the Montana Water Center, simulates small water system operations and can be used in workshops or by individuals on their computers. Users learn the basics of system operation, as well as how to recognize system deficiencies, perform a security risk assessment, and improve the financial and management capacity of a system.

The program features three systems: (1) an untreated groundwater system, (2) a treated groundwater system, and (3) a surface water system. The program features:

Exploration Activities—allows the user to experience system operation scenarios in a virtual environment.

Video Tours—showcases examples of actual small water systems from source to sink.

Exploration Basics—presents an overview of public water system operations.

Glossary—provides necessary terminology.

Virtual System Explorer is available in an online version (for those with high-speed Internet connections), as a downloadable program, or as a DVD that can be played on a computer or a television. To use on a personal computer, you'll need a DVD-ROM drive, a 1 GHz processor, 800x600 16-bit color display, and 256 MB of RAM. To run this on your TV, you'll need a DVD player and a remote control.

The online and downloadable versions of Virtual System Explorer are available on the Montana Water Center Web site at <http://montana.water.edu/training/ve>. Product support information, including frequently asked questions, is available on the site as well. You may also learn more by e-mailing watercenter@montana.edu or calling (406) 994-6690.

A limited number of the programs are available in DVD format through the National Environmental Services Center (NESC). Call NESC at (800) 624-8301 or e-mail info@mail.nesc.wvu.edu. Request product #DWCDTR22 when ordering.

EPA Site Offers Environmental Publications

<http://nepis.epa.gov>

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Service Center for Environmental Publications (NSCEP) announced that new digital services are available through its Web site.

More than 13,000 environmental publications are maintained in the center's archive. Interested people may now:

- search the full text of documents online and locate specific and related publications;
- use a new bookshelf feature to recall saved links to online documents for future visits; and
- create PDFs of scanned documents for downloading and printing.

Environmental publications may also be ordered from NSCEP in paper copy, DVD, CD-ROM, and video by calling (800) 490-9198.

LGEAN Provides Info for Government Officials

www.lgean.org

The Local Government Environmental Assistance Network (LGEAN) provides environmental management, planning, funding, and regulatory information for local government elected and appointed officials, managers, and staff. LGEAN enables local officials to interact with their peers and others online and also offers a toll-free telephone service at (877) 865-4326.

Managed by the International City/County Management Association, the LGEAN Web site has sections devoted to hot topics, regulatory information, tools and resources, a consultants directory, and a calendar of events. If you have a question related to environmental management, click on the "Ask LGEAN" feature.

National Environmental Health Association

www.neha.org

The National Environmental Health Association's (NEHA) mission is to improve the environment in cities, towns, and rural areas throughout the world to create a more healthful environment and quality of life for us all. NEHA's membership includes those in both public and private sectors, academics, and the uniformed services.

Because of its diverse membership, NEHA offers a forum for discussing issues from a variety of viewpoints. The site has information about continuing education and credential renewals, and also offers a series of Web-based courses. Articles from the *Journal of Environmental Health* may be purchased online. The site includes links to environmental health- and protection-related organizations and agencies.

Natural Resources Conservation Service

www.nrcs.usda.gov

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), formerly called the Soil Conservation Service, provides a wealth of information for those involved in watershed planning and source water protection.

According to the NRCS Web site, “communities and local governments work with NRCS state offices and local USDA [U.S. Department of Agriculture] Service Centers to help them protect their natural resources. NRCS also provides information on climatology, water management, watershed planning, and flood control. A coalition of state conservation agencies, The National Association of State Conservation Agencies, provides guidance and operates state environmental, sediment control, and soil erosion prevention programs. The Resource Conservation and Development program focuses on improvement of quality of life achieved through natural resources conservation and community development. NRCS can provide grants for land conservation, water management, community development, and environmental needs in designated areas.”

The site features information on community planning, water quality, water management, water supply, watershed protection, and flood prevention. Watershed planners will want to download the *National Watershed Manual* (www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/watershed/NWSM.html). Those involved with source water protection should visit the National Water Management Center (wmc.ar.nrcs.usda.gov).



Center for Watershed Protection

www.cwp.org

The Center for Watershed Protection is a non-profit organization that provides local governments, activists, and watershed organizations around the country with the technical tools for protecting streams, rivers, and lakes. The center has created and distributed a multidisciplinary strategy for watershed protection that encompasses planning, restoration, research, site design, education, outreach, and training. The site includes a calendar of events, publications, listing of watershed projects, technical tools for assessing and protecting watersheds, and a watershed quiz.

Surf Your Watershed

www.epa.gov/surf/

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency provides the “Surf Your Watershed” Web site. On the site you’ll find tools to help you locate your watershed, a database of watershed groups across the nation, information about wetlands restoration projects, a directory of agencies, and links to additional information.



National Watershed Coalition

www.watershedcoalition.org

Formed in 1989, the National Watershed Coalition (succeeding the older Watershed Congress) is a membership organization made up of national, regional, state, and local organizations, associations, and individuals, that advocate dealing with natural resource problems and issues using watersheds as the planning and implementation unit. Their Web site provides information about watersheds, legislation affecting watersheds, and various brochures and reports.

