

# Education plays its role in water protection

**T**here are many ways to help protect source water: filter strips, riparian buffers, proper use of chemicals, hazardous material disposal, plugging abandoned wells, holding a water festival – and the list goes on.

## Holding a water festival?

Protect drinking water with a water festival? Yes, the information that can be provided and yes even learned during a water festival can protect a water supply. As I visit with school children stopping to view KRWA's Source Water Protection display and groundwater model, I ask them to name items that can contaminate water and methods anyone can use to protect that water. Oil is the one source of

contamination just discussed actually move through the ground to contaminate rivers, lakes and groundwater. It also shows how surface water and ground water can affect each other.

By the way, it's two million gallons of water that could be

## Jewell County Annual Threshing Bee

The setting was one that residents of all Kansas communities can relate to. It was friends, neighbors, and former residents returning for the annual community get-together. It was an

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contaminated by only one quart of oil. Water festivals and water education can vary in types of presentations. I'd like to share a few water festival experiences with you in the rest of this article.

event where food booths, craft booths, a parade, and lots of visiting were the order of the day. KRWA set up the display and groundwater model next to the Jewell County Natural Resources Conservation Service booth that



*Jim Jackson  
Source Water Tech*

contamination that kids mention early in the discussion. My next question is, "how much water might one quart of oil contaminate?" Answers can vary from one gallon to one thousand gallons. After discussing the amount of water that could be contaminated, we usually move on to the need to recycle oil, antifreeze and other automobile fluids. These discussions usually continue by the kids naming sources of contamination and ways to better protect water sources. KRWA uses the ground water model to reinforce these discussions by showing visually how the kinds of

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*Kids and parents watch and listen as Jim puts the groundwater model through its paces at a summer water festival.*

was providing information on farm terracing. It was a very good atmosphere to explain and discuss different ways to protect our water, and with the new groundwater model, to show what



*A scuba volunteer with trash bag in hand readies to make a dive at Crawford State Park Lake to pick up accumulated junk.*

groundwater movement is all about. All of the water suppliers in the area utilize groundwater systems, so it was only appropriate to focus on groundwater. People came and went freely; they asked many questions, watched the groundwater model go through the cycles and picked up literature to take home to read later.

**Crawford State Park Scuba and On-Shore Cleanup and Water Festival**

The scuba divers began the day by helping remove trash that had been dropped, thrown, blown, and even possibly ridden into the lake. The diver's recovered anchors, bottles, cans, fishing poles, lawn chairs and even a skate board from the bottom of the lake. Next the on-shore clean up began. The on-shore crew picked up tires, bottles, cans, an ice chest, and numerous other items. The

cleanup crews were then given a meal for their hard work. The water festival began soon after lunch. The groundwater water model was used to illustrate the movement of contaminated groundwater towards a lake. The model helped both youngsters and adults see the relationship between groundwater and surface water contamination.

**Rice County Conservation Tour and Safety Fair**

The event was set up with 10 stations ranging from tractor safety, anhydrous ammonia safety, and groundwater movement. The students were rotated every 10 minutes until they had attended each station. The youngsters had many questions and were all very appreciative of the presenters. The 5th graders were divided into two groups for lunch and for a water knowledge contest. The event was beneficial for the students and they all left knowing more about conservation and safety.

**Twin Lakes Water Festival**

The campground at Council Grove Lake was the setting for the 36-station water festival. Students from four counties participated at the festival. The students had been



divided and visited a different station for a period of 30 minutes. The festival was a learning experience for all students. Most were in the 5th grade but a few schools also had their 4th grades participate. The students were given snacks and water bottles throughout the day and provided a lunch.

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**Lyons Coloring Contest**

The city of Lyons holds a coloring contest each year and awards the winners of each grade with swimming pool passes to the city pool. The passes are presented to the students during a City Council meeting; the coloring contest shows the students the importance of water.

Education about water does not need to be an all day event; you can show the importance in a short amount of time. If you are interested in hosting a water festival or would like help with some type of water education program, please give KRWA a call we will be pleased to assist in any way possible.



Lyons coloring contest winners front row, from left, Cassie Loesch, Lance Wilder, Cassidy Clarke, Kenan Comley; and back row Mayor Clarence Moses, Taylor Wood, Jonathan Ortiz, Cristina Silva, and Assistant Utilities Superintendent Peggy Hawkins.

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