

For 74 years, New Hampshire has collaborated on clean water issues with other states in the region through its membership with NEIWPCC. Established in 1947, NEIWPCC [NÜ-Ē-PIK] is a regional commission that helps the states of the Northeast preserve and advance water quality. We engage and convene water quality professionals and other interested parties from New England and New York to collaborate on water, wastewater, and other environmental science challenges across shared regions, ecosystems, and areas of expertise.



### EMERGING WATER PROFESSIONALS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Nashua-based Emerging Water Professionals Internship Program (EWPIP) provided two participants with a pathway into the wastewater industry. Created in partnership with the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and the Nashua Division of Public Works, the paid 13-week program culminated in the opportunity to earn a wastewater license. The interns received on-the-job training in various aspects of the wastewater treatment process, including lab work, sample collection, primary and secondary treatment, and other day-to-day operations. They also participated in NEIWPCC's self-paced wastewater courses to prepare for the certification exam. Completion of the NHDES Grade I certification exam permits individuals to apply for entry-level positions in the field.

### SOURCE WATER PROTECTION WORKGROUP

The Source Water Protection Workgroup brings together state and federal staff to compare strategies and participate in discussions and trainings on topics such as fuel storage tanks, groundwater impacts from stormwater infiltration, cyanobacteria, and road salt. The group examined the new municipal zoning guidance documents developed by NHDES, which updates two zoning mandates surrounding residential development on commercially-zoned land.

### LONG ISLAND SOUND PARTNERSHIP WORKGROUP

NEIWPCC hosted the Long Island Sound Partnership's Nitrogen Coordination Workgroup, which regularly has participants from New Hampshire, as well as Vermont, Massachusetts, New York, and Connecticut. These states all have residents who are a part of the Long Island Sound watershed due to their proximity to the Connecticut River. The meetings allow water professionals to coordinate ongoing nitrogen reduction efforts, such as total maximum daily load implementation.

### CLEAN WATER CHALLENGES

- PFAS/emerging contaminants
- Nutrient pollution
- Extreme weather events
- Source water protection
- Harmful algal blooms
- Invasive species
- Leaking underground storage tanks
- Wetlands protection
- Road salt/chloride contamination
- Habitat restoration
- Outdated water infrastructure
- Barriers to fish passage
- Stormwater runoff

### TRAINING WASTEWATER OPERATORS

NEIWPCC provides training for some of our nation's most essential workers: wastewater operators. We offer basic, intermediate, and advanced courses to train operators and prepare them for certification exams. Classes, which are available in-person, online, or in a self-paced format, cover all aspects of the job, from chemistry and microbiology to equipment safety and lab procedures. This year, 73 operators based in New Hampshire participated in a total of 43 courses throughout the region.

Additionally, we offer training and technical assistance for rural, small, and tribal wastewater treatment plants to help them achieve and maintain regulatory compliance. Our staff provided tailored assistance to help communities identify and prioritize solutions to challenges within their collection systems. NEIWPCC also began developing six comprehensive self-paced online training courses that will provide nationwide access to much-needed education and training resources.

### ADVANCING STATE INTERESTS

Working closely with our member states, NEIWPCC represents a regional perspective on proposed water policies to federal parties such as the U.S. EPA and

Congress. We provided comments on regulatory issues, including the Clean Water Act Section 401 certification process, federal budget requests, water-related state revolving fund programs, PFAS human health water quality criteria, and the definition of Waters of the United States.

## COLLABORATION ACROSS STATE LINES

NEIWPCC is governed by its **Executive Committee and Commission**, who collaborate to guide our agenda and identify new priorities. They are leaders in the states' environmental and health agencies, complemented by experts from the private sector. NEIWPCC held three meetings with the full Commission and an additional four with the Executive Committee alone. Representatives from the EPA's Regions I and II also attended.

The commissioners discussed water quality-related concerns; advised NEIWPCC in implementing strategies, projects and programs; and formulated a regional response to environmental policy initiatives. In particular, the commissioners focused on challenges including PFAS and biosolids, cyanobacteria, permit programs, and invasive species in water bodies.

A committee of staff and commissioners developed a new **Strategic Plan** for fiscal years 2026-2030. It outlines four priorities focused on inspiring action, scientific monitoring and data collection, workforce development, and ensuring financial resources. Supporting goals and tactics provide a roadmap for achieving NEIWPCC's mission to advance clean water in the Northeast.

In October, NEIWPCC hosted the **12th U.S. Symposium on Harmful Algae** in Portland, Maine with the theme of "One Bloom: Unifying Harmful Algal Bloom (HAB) Science in Aquatic Ecosystems." More than 500 participants discussed HAB management and mitigation, emerging toxins, predictive modeling and public health threats.

**.12%**

That is how much of NEIWPCC's funding comes from the annual dues paid by our member states: a combined \$151,561 out of the total available funding to NEIWPCC during fiscal year 2025 in the amount of \$128,975,971. Most of our funding comes from Clean Water Act appropriations or through grants and contracts with federal, state, and other entities, but this small contribution makes New Hampshire a member of NEIWPCC's commission.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE COMMISSIONERS

(as of Sept. 30, 2025):

**Rene Pelletier** (vice chair), representing NH DES Commissioner Robert Scott

**Thomas Ballesteros**

**Fred McNeill**

**Marco Philippon**

**Robert Varney**

The annual **Northeast Aquatic Biologists Conference** took place in February, with more than 170 aquatic and environmental biologists in attendance. The event, which was held in Bartlett, New Hampshire, covered topics such as chloride impacts on streams, cyanobacteria, HABs, and long-term monitoring networks.

NEIWPCC held the **35th Annual Nonpoint Source Conference** in Freeport, Maine during April, with the theme "Nonpoint Source Pollution and Clean Water: Perspectives from the Arts, Sciences and Humanities." More than 120 watershed professionals attended sessions focused on water pollution reduction success stories, green infrastructure, watershed restoration, and aquatic ecosystem management.

The **28th National Tanks Conference** brought nearly 700 professionals to Spokane, Washington to collaborate on timely issues facing the underground storage tanks (UST) industry. NEIWPCC also **manages two workgroups** focused on preventing leaking underground storage tanks and **publishes LUSTLine**, a newsletter that promotes the exchange of information in the UST community.

The third season of the **Clean Water Pod** podcast highlighted stories from across the country that showcased innovative approaches with the Clean Water Act 303(d) program. NEIWPCC also coordinated a **national webinar series on total maximum daily loads (TMDLs)** for professionals who regulate and monitor water quality. These focused on trash TMDLs, site-specific water quality criteria and the Lake Loading Response Model.

NEIWPCC revised the **Technical Report 16: Guides for the Design of Wastewater Treatment Works** manual, which includes sections on procurement of services, sanitary sewers and collection systems, wastewater pumping stations, and treated effluent resource recovery. The revisions include updates to align with current industry technology and practices, eliminate out-of-date materials, and add new concepts such as alternative forms of procurement and contaminants of emerging concern. The guide is written for engineers who design wastewater treatment plants, state regulators who review and approve designs, and municipalities that are soliciting professional design services for wastewater treatment facilities.

**Per-and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS)** continue to present critical environmental challenges. NEIWPCC and partners established a Biosolids Technology Hub, an information clearinghouse providing published literature, technology vendors and project summaries for regulators and clean water practitioners to find solutions for PFAS in municipal biosolids or sludge. Wastewater staff were also involved in several working groups.

In response to the Vermont 2023 floods, NEIWPCC was asked to investigate mechanisms to assist wastewater and drinking water facilities in responding to severe weather events. Mutual aid is an important component of the preparedness approach because in times of crisis, collaboration and swift action are paramount. NEIWPCC has been working with our partners in the Water and Wastewater Agency Response Networks (WARN) and Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) to increase awareness about these **state and federal mutual aid response networks** and help utilities fill the gaps in their capabilities.

NEIWPCC hosts virtual and in-person meetings for more than 20 different **workgroups and collaboratives** to improve regional communication and state-federal engagement on critical topics related to water.