



Peterborough Children's
Water Festival



EDUCATOR HANDBOOK

Everything you need for a successful
and enjoyable trip to the
Peterborough Children's Water Festival
at Riverview Park & Zoo

Welcome Message

On behalf of the Peterborough Children's Water Festival Steering Committee, welcome to the annual Peterborough Children's Water Festival!

Peterborough region has many natural gifts, including the lakes, rivers, streams, and ponds that nurture life and bring joy to the thousands of residents – human and non-human – that call this place home.

As a community, we all have a responsibility to protect water in all its forms. Our committee is focused on communicating this responsibility to children in grades 2-5, and making every student's visit to the festival a memorable one. The water festival's activity centres are designed to be hands-on, stimulating, and fun, as well as furthering students' understanding of the water concepts taught through Ontario's curriculum. We are thrilled to be able to offer educational programs in both English and French. Thanks to the hard work of local high school students and teachers, attendees have the option to participate in many of our activity centres in both English and French.

We hope that as educators, you find this annual festival an engaging and useful learning opportunity for your students. In our pursuit of adapting to changing learning needs and curriculum, we also hope that you'll share your feedback so this festival remains a best-practice example of water education.

Please visit our website for additional information about the festival, and links to other sites related to water education. See you in May!

Yours truly,
Patricia Skopelianos
Chair, Peterborough Children's Water Festival

This Educator Handbook is designed to:

- ◆ Provide an overview of the festival and its purpose
- ◆ Help teachers get organized for a day at the festival
- ◆ Suggest ways to prepare your students and chaperones to maximize fun and learning

Land Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge that we are located on the treaty and traditional territory of the Michi Saagig Anishnaabeg.

As an organization working in this region and on these lands and waters, we are grateful to the First Peoples for their care, their stewardship, their teachings, and their relations.

We are committed to respecting the sovereignty of First Nations, honouring the Treaties our ancestors signed, and acknowledging the privilege of being here in this beautiful place.



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Learning in Context



Water – globally, nationally & provincially

Water covers 75% of the planet, making up about 75% of a human's body weight. Water is essential for all life on Earth.

Our lives depend on the availability of clean, fresh, water – for growing food, drinking, washing up, travel, and play. All cultures around the world recognize the sanctity of water. Throughout human history, water has turned mill wheels, carried ships, provided steam power, and produced electricity. Today, water is no less essential to the health of our environment, and our economies.

In Ontario, we enjoy what appears to be an abundance of water. The name 'Ontario' comes from the Haudonasonee language and means 'beautiful water' or 'sparkling water'. There are approximately 250,000 lakes in Ontario, and water covers about one-sixth of our province. Nearly 17 percent of Ontario's land area consists of lakes and rivers, many of which form the province's boundaries, like the Great Lakes and the Ottawa River.

Human activities can negatively affect water sources, sometimes with irreversible outcomes. Here in Ontario, residents and businesses draw 58% of their water supply from lakes and rivers (surface water), and 42% from groundwater. As our population uses, and over-uses, the water supply, it becomes more contaminated. This can endanger the health of people, plants, and wildlife. To keep water sources clean and plentiful, human behaviour must change.

Water in the City & County of Peterborough

Maintaining a clean water supply is key to economic, environmental, and human well-being in the Peterborough region. Here are some characteristics of the Peterborough Region that reinforce the importance of having a community that cares for this valuable resource:

- 💧 Peterborough region has 134 lakes.
- 💧 The City of Peterborough is located in the Otonabee Region Watershed.
- 💧 Residents and businesses rely on piped, municipally treated Otonabee River water in urban areas, and groundwater in rural areas (for wells).
- 💧 Peterborough region contains many important natural features and habitats for regionally and provincially significant flora and fauna. These features provide essential ecosystem functions that support healthy land, air, and water.
- 💧 During the summer, Peterborough region is visited by over 30,000 tourists and cottagers, many of whom come to enjoy the region's natural attractions for outdoor recreation (waterways, forests, caves, and more!).
- 💧 Peterborough region's environmental features are a significant resource for recreational and leisure activities, which contribute to the quality of life experienced by area residents. The Trent-Severn Waterway, waterfront parks, conservation areas, and provincial parks offer both passive and active recreational opportunities, like hiking in Petroglyphs Provincial Park and Warsaw Caves Conservation Area, or fishing in the Otonabee River.

Interesting Water Facts

Did you know?

- 💧 One Litre (L) of oil can contaminate up to 2 million Litres of water!
- 💧 Many homes lose more water from leaky taps and toilets than they use for cooking and drinking!
- 💧 A five-minute shower with a standard shower head uses 100 Litres of water, while the same length of shower with a low flow shower head uses only 35!
- 💧 A single lawn sprinkler can spray 19 L per minute – 50% more water in one hour than a combination of ten toilet flushes, two five-minute showers, two dishwasher loads, and a full load of clothes in a washing machine!
- 💧 Water consumption usually drops by 18-25% after a water meter is installed!



Learning Objectives & Themes

The primary objectives of the PCWF are to develop personal awareness around the importance of water, and foster respect for the natural environment. We know that increased individual awareness contributes to developing a community committed to using natural resources wisely. Additionally, it's an opportunity to extend the Ontario curriculum, including transferable skills whereby students take what is learned and apply it to new situations.

By combining hands-on interactive activities with messages relevant to their daily lives, students 'soak up' knowledge about the properties, uses, connections, and importance of water.

Activity Centres at the festival are grouped into five themes:

Water Conservation

- Examines using water wisely in our homes, schools, and communities.

Water Attitudes

- Introduces historical uses of water, compared with present uses.
- Explores common attitudes toward water, and ways to promote an appreciation of water as a natural resource.

Water Technology

- Looks at the role of water in energy production.
- Examines how water is treated, stored and distributed.

Water Protection

- Examines the connections between soil, air, water, plants, people, and animals.
- Considers the positive steps we can take to keep water clean.

Water Science

- Introduces the physical science of surface water and ground water.
- Introduces the hydrological cycle.
- Explores the role of water quality and quantity to aquatic life.

Curriculum Links

Our hands-on centres are designed to be cross-curricular, integrating the seven transferable skills from the Ontario Language Curriculum while emphasizing environmental regeneration.

Water Festival Themes

CON = Water Conservation PRO = Water Protection
 ATT = Water Attitudes SCI = Water Science
 TEC = Water Technology

Curriculum Links

● Language ● Science
 ● Healthy Living ● Mathematics
 ● Physical Education ● Social Studies

PROGRAM NAME	FESTIVAL THEME					CURRICULUM LINKS				FSL
	CON.	ATT.	TEC.	PRO.	SCI.	2	3	4	5	✓
2 TIMES A DAY	💧					●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
3 P'S	💧			💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
ADVENTURES IN UNDERSTANDING		💧				●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
D.O. THE LIMBO					💧	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
DOING THE LAUNDRY		💧				●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
DOWN THE SEWER				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
GO WITH THE FLOW	💧					●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
GREAT WATER MIGRATION				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
GREAT WATER RACE				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
HEALTHY SHORELINES				💧	💧	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
INSPECTOR H2O	💧					●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
LATHER UP!	💧					●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
NO WATER OFF A DUCK'S BACK				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
OFF I GO	💧					●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
OSPREY SURVIVOR					💧	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
OTTERLY AMAZING				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
ROLLING THROUGH THE SHED				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
ROYAL FLUSH	💧					●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
SALTY SOLUTIONS					💧	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
SEPTIC SIGHTS!				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
SETTLER WATER RACE		💧				●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
SOMETHING FISHY'S GOING ON				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
SPLASHY FEUD	💧	💧	💧	💧	💧	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
SPONGE BOG FROG HOP				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
WATER IN YOU		💧				●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓
WATER TO PLASTIC				💧		●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	●●●●	✓

Before the Festival

Please consider the following when preparing for the PCWF:

- 💧 Book your transportation in advance & read through this planning guide.
- 💧 Divide your class into groups of five. Ensure the groups are no larger than five students for supervision and safety reasons.
- 💧 Assign one adult chaperone to each group of students. Children with medical needs (administering medication, epilepsy, special physical needs, etc.) should be in a group supervised by the teacher, or by their parent/guardian.
- 💧 Encourage your adult supervisors to read the Chaperone Handbook, available at pcwf.net/educator-information/plan-ahead.
- 💧 Review photo release forms for your students. Chaperones should be made aware of any student who cannot be photographed or interviewed.
- 💧 Determine the activities that best suit the learning objectives of your class. Brief descriptions of each activity centre can be found at pcwf.net/educator-information/activity-centres. The Festival Itinerary template (p. 13) may be used to list preferred activities you'd like your chaperones to visit with your students. Make copies of the itinerary and distribute to your chaperones on festival day.
- 💧 If any chaperones plan to meet your class at the festival, please encourage them to carpool or use a car-free form of transportation. Parking will not be available to them at the zoo, and cars will need to be parked offsite.
- 💧 Encourage everyone to bring litterless lunches and snacks, including a refillable water bottle.
- 💧 Prepare a sign with your school's name and ask the bus driver to display it in the front window when they pick you up at the end of the festival.

Festival Day

- ◆ The PCWF is rain or shine. Please encourage everyone to dress for the weather. Waterproof footwear is a good idea as the site may be wet.
- ◆ Upon arrival at Riverview Park & Zoo, please have all students remain on the bus until you receive instructions to unload. Your class will be assigned a section of the festival to start at before disembarking the bus. This helps avoid congestion and maximize learning.
- ◆ Before disembarking, make sure everyone knows when and where to meet at the end of the day - the area indicated on the map as "Meeting Zone".
- ◆ Ensure each adult supervisor has a festival map and their group's itinerary. We ask each group to start the day at a different activity centre to avoid congestion.
- ◆ The PCWF puts safety first. If any of your students or chaperones have medical needs (diabetes, epilepsy, severe allergies, etc.) please report to the First Aid station, located in the registration tent, and submit a written description of the person and the condition(s) before beginning your festival day.
- ◆ You may stop for lunch and snacks at time that's convenient for you. Activity centres close for lunch 11:45am - 12:15pm.
- ◆ Staff and volunteers are located throughout the festival. Should questions or problems arise, do not hesitate to approach them. They are here to help!
 - Volunteers - bright yellow pinnies
 - Festival Organizers - green t-shirts with the PCWF logo
 - First Aid Personnel - red pinnies.
- ◆ Discourage students from going near the riverbank or feeding waterfowl at the park. The current in the Otonabee River can be strong, especially when water levels are high.
- ◆ Lost and found is at the registration tent. Lost items will be left at Riverview Park & Zoo Lost and Found after the festival.
- ◆ The festival ends at 2pm. Head to the Meeting Zone if your class is taking the bus.

Directions to the Water Festival

Riverview Park and Zoo

1300 Water St., Peterborough, ON K9J 7G4

The Bus entrance to the parking lot is at the lights at Water St. & Carnegie Ave.





May 27th & 28th, 2026 Activity Centres



1	Waterdrop Art	15	Marine Safety	29	Face Painting 2
2	Settler Water Race	16	Off I Go	30	Peterborough Public Library
3	Stepping Stones	17	D. O. the Limbo	31	Aqua Quest
4	Great Water Race	18	Splashy Feud	32	Healthy Shorelines Healthy Rivers
5	Otterly Amazing	19	Water Power	33	Lather Up
6	Water to Plastic, Plastic to Water	20	No Water Off a Duck's Back	34	Leveraging the Looks
7	Down the Sewer	21	Water In You	35	Salty Solutions
8	Osprey Survivor	22	Go With the Flow	36	Our Little Wormery
9	Septic Sights	23	Royal Flush	37	Canadian Canoe Museum
10	Tapping the Source	24	Two Times a Day	38	Sponge Bog Frog Hop
11	Great Water Migration	25	Inspector H2O	39	Doing the Laundry
12	River Race	26	Wild Rice Dance Off	40	Somethin' Fishy Going On
13	Rollin' Through the Shed	27	Face Painting 1		
14	Pipe Patrol	28	Padding Puppeteer		



Questions?

Let's Connect!



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<https://pcwf.net/>



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