

FLUSH

Calling Michigan Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to unravel the mystery of water

Have you ever wondered where the water comes from when you turn on your tap? Or, where it goes when you flush? Water, coming and going, can be a big mystery.

We are sending out a call to Michigan Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to help us unravel the mystery through a new program called “FLUSH!”

This unique program will answer those questions for Scouts and their parents by opening the critical drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities in local communities that are so important to maintaining fresh water resources.

Scouts will be offered guided tours through water treatment plants in their area. During the tour, scouts and parents will have fun while learning about the science of water, water infrastructure, and the importance of this natural resource.

Scouts will observe many areas of water science including chemistry, biology, and engineering. They will see for themselves, the technologies used to purify water from different sources, such as lakes, rivers, streams, or underground wells and then pump the purified water into the faucets at home. They will learn how the water that is **FLUSH**ed down the drain is treated, cleaned, and released into a natural watershed. They will also get to meet with and ask questions of the scientists and plant operators.

The program allows Boys Scouts to earn a stand-alone **FLUSH** patch and satisfy some criteria for the Soil and Water Conservation Merit Badge, the Sustainability Merit Badge, and the STEM/Nova Award. Girl Scouts can fulfill some requirements for the Legacy: Naturalist Water Badge, the EPA Water Drop Patch, and the Wonders of Water Journey.

The program’s creator, Angella Breitenbeck, says she hopes **FLUSH** gets young people excited about science and compassionate for the planet, and it’s most important resource. **FLUSH** was conceived as Angella’s community project from LandmarkEducation’s Self-Expression and Leadership program.

“Ever since I was young I have been drawn to science related fields,” she says. “My favorite day all throughout school was the day we got to watch a NOVA special. And, who doesn’t love a field trip? I know I do! If the tours can inspire one child about science, the world, and the endless possibilities that are out there, then I’ve done my job.”

Charles Bellmore, Utilities Director and tour guide says, “Teaching the Boy and Girls Scouts of America about our drinking water and wastewater treatment systems is important because the Scouts will become the leaders of tomorrow who will inherit the responsibility of managing these facilities that protect public health and the environment.”

With this commitment, Angella began to share her ideas with a network of dedicated drinking water and waste water professionals who came together to form a team: Sandra Buchner (Grand Rapids WWTP), Amy Vail (Cadillac WWTP & WTP), Mary Lenardson (Jackson WWTP), Charles Bellmore (Mt. Clemens WWTP & WTP), and Bob Martin (South Lyon WWTP & WTP). After discussions with the local Boy Scout and Girl Scout Council Event Coordinators, the tours were up and running. The formation of the team will ensure the sustainability of the **FLUSH** program for scouts and parents to enjoy time together while unraveling the mystery of our water.

LandmarkEducation
<http://www.landmarkeducation.com/>

Written by Justin Pletzke

For information on the FLUSH Program or to sign up for a tour contact:

Angella Breitenbeck
Paragon Laboratories, Inc.
12649 Richfield Ct.
Livonia, MI 48150
Direct Line: 734-469-5610
General: 734-462-3900 x5610
Fax: 734-462-3911
abreitenbeck@paragonlaboratories.com

