

Timmins Children's Water Festival



Volunteer Information Guide

Thank you for volunteering with the Timmins Children's Water Festival

The Timmins Children's Water Festival aims to educate more than 400 grade 3 and 4 about the importance of water in our daily lives. Through interactive displays, volunteers teach students to respect and conserve our valuable water resources, so that they can become good water stewards of the future. About 60 volunteers are needed each day to staff the activity centres.

The Festival brings together educators, water quality specialists, community volunteers, conservation groups and local industry to provide local students with the opportunity to discover the importance of our most precious resource – water. This annual event takes place at the Hollinger Park in Timmins.



Why Should I Help?

You can be a part of this fun event that reminds everyone of the importance of water. Your participation will make a difference to the children of our community. Your assistance makes the Water Festival possible!

As a volunteer you will have the opportunity to participate in this fun and educational Festival and learn about environmental water issues.

Volunteers will also gain valuable leadership and teaching skills along with other benefits including:

- Increase your network
- Meet new people
- Become involved in your community
- build your resume
- Volunteer hours (public session)

Who will attend the Festival?

About 400 students from grades 3-4 will attend the Festival over the course of two days.

What Happens at the event?

The Festival has more than 20 hands-on activity centres that challenge students to consider the importance of water to themselves as individuals and to the community at large. The activity centres are based on 5 themes: Water Conservation, Water Protection, Water Science, Water Technology and Changing Attitudes.

Each activity has one or two simple messages. Each volunteer will receive background information for their activity centres and instructions on how to run it.



What do you get for helping out?

All volunteers will receive a Timmins Children's Water Festival t-shirt, refreshments, lunch and a certificate of appreciation.

How much Time is needed?

A minimum of one day commitment is required to volunteer, from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. If you would like to volunteer for more than one day, please do!

A day will be organized prior to the Festival to prepare students for their volunteer roles and to provide them with the necessary material and training to run their activity centre.

Public Session

New to the 2010 Timmins Children's Water Festival is a public session where members of the public can also participate in this fun and educational Festival. The public session will be held on the first day from 4:00 PM – 7:00 PM.

Volunteers are also required to run this session. Hours that are worked during the public session can be counted towards the 40 hours of required Community Service.

What is a typical day at the Festival like?

8:00 a.m.

Arrive at Hollinger Park and meet in the gathering area. After registration and introductions, a 'volunteer trainer' will show you your activity centre for orientation and "hands-on" training. This is an opportunity for you to become familiar with the activity centre before the students arrive. The 'volunteer trainer' will answer any questions you may have.

9:15 – 9:30 a.m.

First group of elementary students arrives by bus and are sent to the 25 activity centres – including yours.

9:30 – 11:45 a.m.

Deliver fun and exciting 'water message' activities to students, teachers and parent volunteers.

11:45 a.m. – 12:10 p.m.

Lunch is provided free for all volunteers. There are no food concessions available on-site. Feel free to bring a reusable mug for coffee and hot chocolate – it will be supplied in the morning and afternoon.

12:10 – 12:15 p.m.

Return to your activity centre. Students will start arriving for the afternoon session.

12:15 – 2:45 p.m.

Continue to deliver your water activity to students

2:45 – 3:00 p.m.

Clean up your station and take inventory. Return to information tent for a quick wrap-up session.

Tips for your day at the Festival:

- Wear comfortable shoes as you will spend most of the day standing.
- Wear something you can put a Timmins Children's Water Festival t-shirt over. You will get one in the morning when you arrive. It helps students, teachers and parents know you are activity leader and Festival Volunteer!
- Dress for the weather, activities run rain or shine. You will be outside most of the day. Please wear comfortable clothing that you do not mind getting a bit dirty or wet. Be sure to check the weather report before you leave the house.
- Read through this training manual and the information on how to operate your activity centre. It will give you the information you need to run your activity centre if you need additional information or have questions. Feel free to ask the organizers.

Other important things to note:

- Volunteers not arriving by bus are asked to car-pool to keep the numbers of cars in the parking lot to a minimum.
- A first aid station will be set up in the information tent. Lost and found (for people and possessions) will also be located in the information tent.



Learning Centre Host Overview

The aim of the Festival is to educate and empower elementary school students to become active guardians of their water supply. The activities are designed to be relevant to youth, hands on and interactive, action-oriented and behavior influencing.

Some tips for making your activity fun and keeping the students' attention.

Discovery & Relating to Learners

It is often helpful to start with a known phenomenon (i.e: less fish in some lakes) then move into the unknown (i.e: what effects acid rain has on lakes i.e. fish dying) and wrap up by going back to known relevant events (i.e: using less electricity reducing driving to reduce emissions that lead to acid rain).

Students need to understand at the beginning of the activity **how the topic related to THEM.** Make complex ideas simple by using comparisons with everyday objects and events in your explanations and examples.

- Encourage students to hypothesize, encourage explanations instead of just description, encourage the learners to discover something new.
- Ask questions instead of giving facts right away.
- Increase your 'response time', i.e., giving the students at least 10 seconds to think about an answer instead of telling it to them immediately.

Movement

If you incorporate appropriate movement into an activity it will discourage squirming and distraction and will help children to become more involved with learning.

By the end of the day almost everyone is tired - it may be helpful to have them sit down during the descriptive part of your activity.

Most students will get restless or easily distracted after 5 minutes - try switching between speakers or vary your tone to keep your activity engaging.

Use hands on learning

- Doing an experiment and discovering the answer will make more of a lasting impact than watching and listening to someone else do it.
- Try to find as many roles as possible for students to actively participate (ex: timing, pouring water).
- Try to use simple language that can be understood by 8-10 year olds.

Wrap Up

At the end of the activity, try to reconnect the ideas that the students were introduced to with their everyday actions: what do they and their families do at home to save or waste water how do their actions affect water pollution and local wildlife habitat and so on.

Smile & have fun!



Volunteer Roles

There are different volunteer positions with the Timmins Children's Water Festival.

JOB TITLE: Activity Centre Volunteer

LOCATION: Children's Water Festival site, Hollinger Park

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Before the festival, read over the activity description, and be sure you are comfortable with the purpose and concepts of the activity.
- Staff and operate the assigned/selected activity centre during school visits
- Deliver "water message" pertinent to the activity
- Ensure active participation by all students

TIME COMMITMENT:

- A minimum of day commitment (8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.)

BENEFITS:

- Opportunity to participate in the fun and educational Festival and learn about environmental water issues.
- Leadership and teaching skills
- A Certificate of Appreciation, Festival T-Shirt and lunch.

ON THE FESTIVAL DAY(S):

- Report to the registration tent at 8:00 a.m. for a briefing session.
- Pick up your Festival T-shirt and material for your centre, including maps of activity centres (information about last minute changes, etc.)
- Meet your "volunteer trainer" he/she will escort you to your activity centre and answer any questions you may have
- Have fun!
- Fill out your evaluation form before you go

REMEMBER:

- You are helping students to discover their relationships to water, try using open-ended questions to guide the discussion
- Use comparisons to places, measurements, and time spans that students would be familiar with
- Be open, positive and enthusiastic, and even dramatic
- No smoking at the activity centres
- Dress appropriately for the weather