



QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024

What does safe water mean to you?

That's the question we've been asking this spring, as waterways thaw, temperatures rise, and we begin to wind down our seasonal campaign. It's a question relevant to all the work that we do at Water First, [and one that has so many valid, important answers.](#)

“Safe water means not wondering if the source of the water was safe, or considering what equipment was used by how many skilled people to keep it that way.”

Krysta Wordock, Water First Project Manager

“Safe water means life.”

Melodie Squires, recent graduate of the Drinking Water Internship

Thank you for your consideration and support for our work. For Water First, safe water means education and training. It means building local capacity. It means skilled, passionate people working in their communities. And it means continuing to do this work, together.

Try this family Earth Day activity from our Schools Water Program Team – become a water scientist at home!

Celebrate Earth Day with a fun activity from our Schools Water Program Team! This classroom favourite is easily adjusted for an at-home experience. With a few household ingredients and supplies, your family can have fun with an experiment that teaches kids about common pollutants in our water and the methods used to try to remove them. [Try The Pollution Solution](#) and become a water scientist at home!

World Water Day with Water First

It should come as no surprise that March 22 is a big deal at Water First. We mark the day, along with National Indigenous Water Operator's Day on March 21st, with reflection on the work we've done, pride for the work we're doing, and excitement for the work that is still to come.

This year, a team from Water First attended various World Water Day events in Alberta, including the [Southern Alberta Institute of Technology's](#) World Water Day Expo, showcasing innovations contributing to water sustainability. We were thrilled to support Water First's Community Engagement Director, Sarah Jayne Kendall, as she spoke on a Water Expert Panel.

For more on Water First's World Water Day adventures in Alberta, [check out the blog post here.](#)



Women & Water Event: Celebrating International Women's Day

Thank you to the over 200 participants who joined us in celebrating International Women's Day! This year, Water First held an engaging virtual panel to highlight women in the water sciences.

The thoughtful conversation was hosted by Adrianna Belinski, our Program Manager, Education, and our panelists included Jean Marie Colbourn, a member of our Indigenous Advisory Council, as well as past program participants, Laura Mallinson and McKaylii Jawbone.

We are lucky to be able to work with such passionate women who are dedicated to protecting safe, clean water today and for future generations.

To read more about the women making waves in water science, [check out the blog post here.](#)

[Watch the event highlights here](#)

Water First heads west for our first Internship in Manitoba!

In February, Water First launched a Drinking Water Internship with [Interlake Reserves Tribal Council \(IRTC\)](#) in Manitoba – our very first Internship to take place outside of Ontario!

The project was developed in collaboration with IRTC, with a focus on networking opportunities and sharing knowledge between the participating communities.

During the 15-month internship program, 14 interns from the seven Interlake Reserves Tribal Council communities will accumulate 1,800 hours of on-the-job experience in their home community water and/or wastewater treatment plant. Interns will study safety, watersheds, water treatment and distribution, water chemistry and sampling, and tour facilities like the Lake St. Martin First Nation water treatment plant.

The participants will pursue certification as small drinking water and small wastewater operators as well as Class 1 water treatment and wastewater treatment.



The results are in!

Water First recently asked 6,000 of our supporters to answer an online survey about their experience. We thank everybody who took the time to participate – we're always looking to enhance the donor experience so your feedback is invaluable to us! Some of the things we learned:

Top 3 aspects of Water First's work that is most important to our supporters:

1.

Access to safe, clean water

2.

Drinking water concerns in communities

3.

Collaboration with Indigenous communities

Important Upcoming Dates

April

22 Earth Day

May

5 Red Dress Day (National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People)

June

1-30 National Indigenous History Month & Pride Month

19 World Refill Day/Day Without Plastic

21 National Indigenous Peoples Day

Donate today and your gift will be doubled!



Canada Life is matching donations up to \$50,000. Act fast! Donations will only be matched until April 30!

For more information, contact Ami Gopal, Director of Development at ami.gopal@waterfirst.ngo or 1-800-970-8467 ext. 106



Water First Education & Training Inc.
10 Francis St. E., Creemore, ON L0M 1G0
1-800-970-8467 | info@waterfirst.ngo | www.waterfirst.ngo
Charitable Registration No: 83852 5269 RR0001



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