

National Environmental Laboratory Professionals Week (NELPW)

April 24–30, 2016: Potential Activities and Resources

Convene a Lab Week Committee

This allows staff to truly own the week and generate ideas in which they will be interested.

Encourage Training

Encourage staff to participate in one or more of the following trainings; consider scheduling a conference room for a group session. Options include:

- [Harmful Algal Blooms: Drinking Water Impacts and Lab Methods](#)
- [Laboratory Fraud: Why Should I Worry... What Could Happen?](#)
- [Managing Data Quality in an Environmental Laboratory](#)
- [Learning how to incorporate Lean into your laboratory practices](#)
- Any of EPA's [Water Laboratory Alliance \(WLA\) training videos](#). Learn about how your laboratory can strengthen our nation's ability to respond to a water contamination event. Consider signing up for WLA's live [Prospective Members Webinar](#) on Wednesday, June 15 from 1-2 pm ET.

Check out APHL's [Continuing Education and Training](#) homepage for all listings and online registration.

Invite Guest Lecturers

- from your EPA regional laboratory
- from a local university
- from a water utility

Engage Your Community on Safe Drinking Water Concerns

The recent crisis in Flint, Michigan may provide a good opportunity to communicate with the public about the local water supply and/or the laboratory's role in keeping drinking water safe. Consider the following examples of proactive communication related to this issue:

- Show APHL's free webinar "[Lead Testing, Response and Communications](#)" to laboratory staff, environmental health professionals and the public to understand the public health laboratory's role in testing drinking water and people for lead.
- Rhode Island hosted a [meeting](#) between local officials to discuss the current status of their water supply.
- Pennsylvania issued a [press release](#) highlighting the steps they are taking to reduce lead exposure.
- Distribute APHL's "[Are You Protected Under the Safe Drinking Water Act?](#)" fact sheet.

Educate Your Community on the Importance of Environmental Laboratories

- Ask your Governor for a proclamation, recognizing the laboratory and the week.
- Do a press release about the week and your work.
- Consider releasing your annual lab report this week.
- Create a short (3–5 minute) video about your laboratory. For example, see videos from [Wisconsin](#) and [Pennsylvania](#). Also, APHL also has a [short video](#) providing an explanation of what public health laboratories do, which may be helpful for public outreach.
- Use the '[PHL Open House](#)' guide developed by one of APHL's Emerging Leaders cohorts to help plan an open house.
- Use APHL's '[Env. Labs for NELPW](#)' PowerPoint template to give a guest lecture at a local graduate school. APHL's [issue brief concerning environmental laboratory capabilities](#) to show your community what your lab may do.
- Write a blog post for your state environmental agency or health department.
- Conduct a departmental networking event, like a "Jeopardy" competition or similar activity, that will encourage department colleagues who may not be familiar with the laboratory to learn more.
- Consider recognizing someone from outside the laboratory who contributed to its advancement with a "friend of the laboratory" or similar award.

Talk About Being Environmentally Friendly

- Host a "Green and Blue Day," where staff wear colors representing earth and water.
- Hold a grounds-keeping afternoon: where staff help with weeding, mulch, planting etc.
- Ask if your regional EPA Office plans to do something for [Earth Day](#) (Wednesday, April 22nd), and see how you can participate.
- Ask someone in the environmental laboratory to use the APHL [slide-deck on "being green:"](#) tailor it and present it to the lab.
- Encourage employees to do a "[Meatless Monday](#)," or purchase items at a local farmer's market or go to an organic food store.
- Encourage employees to "Travel Differently on Tuesday": find someone to car-pool with, take the bus, walk or ride your bike to work.

Hold a Contest in Your Lab

- Some ideas include an environmental photo, art or poetry contest.

Take Pictures, Tweet (#LabWeek) and Send Stories or Suggestions to APHL

- Send all of these and more (see below) via email to sarah.wright@aphl.org.
- Consider other resources or materials that other labs might want to use.
- Let us know what you liked about this Toolkit, what you think could be improved and any other comments!