



## Students Get a Taste of Environmental Careers

One would be hard-pressed to convince a teenager that finding bugs in rivers and streams is a good thing. But for one week this past month, the students at the Regional Water Authority's (RWA) Environmental Careers Summer Camp learned that not only is it a good thing, it's critical for a healthy water supply.

The nine students attend the RWA's adopted school, [Common Ground High School](#) – a unique learning institution whose mission is to promote healthy living and sustainable environmental practices. This mission complements that of the RWA's as we provide customers with high-quality water and service, while promoting the preservation of watershed land and aquifers.

As students took turns testing the waters of the Mill River in Hamden to gauge water quality, they were tasked with searching for macroinvertebrates, like dragonfly nymphs and crayfish, which can only survive in clean water. Seeing these in abundance is a good sign that the water is healthy. The students were fearless as they searched for and collected bugs, some resembling "the Michelin Man." According to RWA Real Estate Manager and workshop facilitator, John Triana, "those are the best!"

In addition, they also learned about watersheds, water treatment, safety, forestry, laboratory analysis and water-borne pathogens, and they got a primer on career possibilities at the RWA. Most of these young people had not considered a vocation in the water industry, but the facilitator at the camp opened their eyes to the opportunities. Learning about positions in front- and back-office operations showed them how important and noble our work is to make life better for people by delivering water for life.

For six years running, we've offered this unique, week-long educational program with the support of a generous grant from our [Watershed Fund](#). In doing so, I'm confident that the classroom learning and hands-on activities these scholars participated in will impact their future career choices and will challenge them to think differently about the link between human activity on land and the water quality of streams, rivers and reservoirs.

For more information on RWA's Environmental Careers Summer Camp and other education programs, email our Water Science Educator, Lisa DiFrancesco, at [LDiFrancesco@rwater.com](mailto:LDiFrancesco@rwater.com).