



Quick Facts for 2015 Coaches and Teams

For more information, visit www.maenvirothon.org
or contact Brita Dempsey, Envirothon coordinator via email massenvirothon@gmail.com

The Main Event. The 2015 competition will be held all day on Thursday, May 14, near the Visitor Center at the Quabbin Reservoir, Belchertown, Massachusetts. Some key details:

- Teams with as many as ten students and as few as two students will be allowed to compete. Teams of at least five will break into sub-teams of two to four to cover all elements of the competition.
- The competition begins on time. Late teams are allowed to enter the competition as they arrive, but cannot make up lost time or missed stations.
- At registration on the day of the event, teams receive a schedule for the morning that ensures that their sub-teams have a chance to compete at all four ecostations (soil, water, wildlife, forest) and to make a Current Issue presentation.
- The morning competition will take the form of three 65-minute sessions. At each ecostation, sub-teams take a short answer/hands-on test of skills and knowledge related to forests, soil, wildlife, and water resources. Tests include use of provided resource materials and assessment of conditions at the site.
- Sub teams will also be scheduled for service and learning activities during the morning sessions.
- At the Current Issue station the whole team gathers and five members make a 15-minute presentation of their findings and recommendations to a panel of judges, then answer judges' questions for 10 minutes. Teams are scored on their knowledge, recommendations, and presentation skills. Copies of the score sheets and scoring criteria used by the judges are included in the spring mailing.
- Coaches are allowed to observe their team's Current Issue presentation but do not accompany their sub-teams to the ecostations. There is a separate program for coaches.
- At lunchtime, teams are invited to relax, make new friends, share their community research and other experiences at the Roundtable session, and check their answers and meet the natural resource experts behind the questions on the morning's tests.
- The day concludes with recognition of teams that have qualified for the Community Research and Community Action awards. Final competition scores are posted by the following day.

2015 Current Issue is Climate Crisis: Taking Action in Massachusetts Communities. Teams investigate this issue as it pertains to their own community and local ecosystems, identify the critical problems and potential courses of action, and develop a presentation of their findings and recommendations. See <http://www.maenvirothon.org/currentissue.htm>

Rules. All team members and coaches must agree to abide by the Massachusetts Envirothon Rules in all aspects of the program. The rules are posted on the website. Final amendments for 2015 will be posted by March.

Competition Scoring and Awards. A total of 400 points is possible in the competition. Each ecostation test is worth 75 points. The Current Issue presentation is worth 100 points, with a team's score derived by averaging the judges' individual scores. Mass Envirothon awards prizes for the first-, second-, and third-place winners overall and the top-scoring team at each ecostation and for the Current Issue. The five top-scoring teams at each station and the top ten teams overall are acknowledged in the post-event news release.

Envirothon beyond Massachusetts. The overall first-place Massachusetts team has the opportunity to represent the state in a competition held each summer that draws winning teams from states and provinces all across the continent (see <http://www.envirothon.org/>), sponsored by the non-profit National Conservation Foundation ("NCF"). The NCF Envirothon is scheduled for July 27-August 2, 2015 at Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri.

Community Research and Community Action Awards. These awards are optional and noncompetitive. They recognize teams that have met a high standard in their community research and have taken what they learned and applied it in service to their community.

Workshops: Mass Envirothon organizes several full-day workshops throughout the year. All workshops are free for registered teams and coaches; others may participate for \$10 each. Mass Envirothon does not limit the number of participants from any school at any workshop, but we ask for an adult-to-youth ratio of at least 1:10 for participating groups.

- Wednesday November 5 at UMass Amherst. This event includes workshops on all Envirothon topics but has a special focus on the Current Issue..
- Friday, February 6 at Worcester Technical High School. This event includes workshops on all ecostation topics and the Current Issue.
- Saturday, April 11 at Alden Research Laboratory, Holden. This workshop includes sessions with information on the Current Issue and how to prepare, plus workshops on all ecostation topics and a session to gather coach advice and feedback.

Resource Materials. All registered teams receive

- Mass Envirothon Manual. This resource in cd format includes background and test prep information for teams relating to soil, forest, wildlife, and water resources.
- Maps. Teams are provided with maps of their town for use in their community research and their presentations.
- Current Issue Guides. Useful links and a guide to getting started in their community research. This information is also posted on the website.

Spring Mailing. In mid March, Mass Envirothon posts on the website and sends out to all registered teams:

- The final schedule for the May competition and directions to the event site
- Intent to Compete Form (must be completed - except for signatures - and returned by April 30)
- Frequently Asked Questions about the Envirothon (including what to wear and bring)
- Final Current Issue information, including
 - The Current Issue Problem (including final guidelines and suggestions for presentations)
 - Current Issue Scoring Sheet
 - Judging Guidelines for the Current Issue
- Items to bring with you to on-site Envirothon Registration at the May competition.

Roundtables. At lunchtime on the day of the Envirothon, teams are invited to host informal roundtables where they share their Envirothon experiences (their “EnviroTrek through the year) with other teams, judges, and community volunteers. All teams, and especially those earning Community Awards, are encouraged to participate.

Registration (a three-step process)

- Program Registration. In order to participate in the 2015 Mass Envirothon, teams must submit their \$200 registration fee and Program Registration form by Friday, January 30, 2015.
- Final Registration (must be submitted by Thursday, April 30, 2015).
 - Intent to Compete. This form asks the team for the names of the members (up to 10) who will be competing, their plans for how they will break into sub-teams, and their preferences for which sub-teams will compete at which ecostations.
 - Community Awards Registration. This form asks teams to document their community research and action projects to certify that they meet the standards for these awards.
- Day of Competition: Thursday, May 14, 2015. Registration opens at 7:30. Check in by 8:30 to get name tags and schedules for the competition and confirm community award registration, then have a team picture taken.

Sponsors. The Massachusetts Envirothon is planned each year by the Massachusetts Envirothon Steering Committee, a subcommittee of the Massachusetts State Commission for the Conservation of Soil, Water, and Related Resources. Members of the Steering Committee represent a variety of federal and state agencies, business, and nongovernmental organizations. The program relies on the support and good will and participation and financial support of a variety of local, state, and federal agencies, educational institutions, businesses, non-profit organizations, and individual volunteers. Close to 90% of the Mass Envirothon “budget” comes from partnerships, volunteerism, and contributed resources. A small (though critical) 10% comes from cash donations and grants.