

Publication features citizen water monitoring efforts from around the globe

A publication produced by Alabama Water Watch (AWW), titled *Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring – Data Credibility and Applications*, features volunteer citizen water monitoring efforts in Alabama, Mexico, Brazil and the Philippines. Since 1992, AWW has trained and certified nearly 5,000 citizen monitors who have submitted more than 55,000 water quality records from about 750 waterbodies state-wide to the AWW database.

The publication recounts how AWW established a high level of data credibility by developing US EPA-approved protocols, and by conducting side-by-side testing of AWW citizen water monitoring methods and Standard Methods (Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th edition, APHA, Washington, D. C.). The AWW protocol for water chemistry monitoring was approved by EPA in 1994, and a revision of it was approved in 2004. AWW received EPA approval for its bacteriological monitoring protocol in 1999. Several side-by-side comparisons of citizen water quality data with Standard Methods (agency) data are presented, from both laboratory and field (stream and lake) examples. Starting in 1994, the AWW model was expanded globally through the efforts of Global Water Watch (GWW), to citizen volunteers in the Philippines, Thailand, China, Brazil, Ecuador and Mexico.

Applications of citizen data featured in the publication include the production of outreach publications featuring various groups' data and local water issues, AWW and GWW presentations to interpret monitoring group data, watershed-level bacteria monitoring to identify sources of *E. coli* contamination in surface waters, long-term trend monitoring to determine if water quality is getting better or getting worse, monitoring bacterial contamination in drinking water, use of the data in environmental education and outreach efforts, and use of the data to influence water policy.

The final section of the publication discusses the sustainability of citizen volunteer monitoring and the lessons learned through AWW and GWW experiences, as well as how to contact AWW for those that would like additional information. To access the publication, *Community-Based Water Quality Monitoring – Data Credibility and Applications*, go to: <https://aww.auburn.edu/Docs/Other/DataCredibility.pdf>.

