

# Hardwick Elementary Water Tests High For Lead

**Hardwick Elementary and Hazen on Bottled Water "Out of an Abundance of Caution" Hardwick Water is Safe."**

by Doug McClure

**HARDWICK** — A single test for lead at Hardwick Elementary during the summer came back at double the level where the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requires action to be taken.

According to Orleans South Supervisory Union (OSSU) Facility Director Jeff Lecours, a preschool teacher used a state-supplied lead testing kit in one location. The "action level" used by the EPA is 15 parts per billion; the sample came back at 30 parts per billion, according to Lecours.

Both Hardwick Elementary and Hazen Union School are using bottled water until the results from a new round of tests, which were performed last Friday, September 2, come back, Lecours says, "out of an abundance of caution."

Hardwick Elementary School Principal Patrick Pennock declined to comment.

Lecours says that he is not concerned, because it was one test, in one location, done during the summer, when there would not have



photo by Vanessa Fournier

**Three hundred thirty-one cases of water were donated to Hardwick Elementary and Hazen Union School on August 30 by Walmart. Fern Rover, a parent of students at Hardwick Elementary and Hazen Union and an employee of Walmart, asked the company to donate the water for the schools.**

been water regularly used and could have been sitting in pipes for a long time. The standard procedure for any water test, called a

flush test, is to use multiple sites and test by running the water for a period before sampling.

Lecours also said that the OSSU

had the samples driven up to Endyn's Williston lab for expedited testing. They hope to have results back before Friday, September 9, according to OSSU Superintendent Christine Labadie. Cabotbury resident John Madigan, of KD Associates, a South Burlington environmental testing firm, collected the samples.

Hardwick's schools are not required to and do not regularly test for lead in the water, as they are on Hardwick's town water system. Most schools with their own water systems are considered public water systems and testing at the school is mandatory, according to the Department of Health's D0H1 Lori Craig. Schools with their own wells are not, if they serve under 25 person. For these schools, testing is voluntary. Craig says,

"Town Manager Jon Jewett says Hazen's water is supplied from aquifers underground, which is a first level of very effective filtering. Cabot is on a well that is tested monthly and for copper and lead every three months. Cabotbury also has lead levels so low that the required testing interval is a three to nine year period. The 2015 test of Hardwick's water quality showed an average level of 9 parts per billion for lead, according to October 2015."

Lecours also said that the OSSU



Kevin Broderick harvests hops at Whitefield Hop Yard in East Hardwick. photo by Doug McClure harvester, which strips the cones off for processing. The vines will be fed into a

## East Hardwick Hops Farm Fall Harvest Successful

by Doug McClure

**EAST HARDWICK** — Fall has settled in early this bright Saturday morning, with the mercury just above forty degrees. Mike Noyes of Wicked Bines Farm's hops harvester is purring away, stripping the cones from the plants; Kevin Broderick and Karen navigate the row of centen-

rial hops, she driving the tractor, he perched atop a twelve-foot tall structure made from pallets, two-by-fours, cables, and optimism that allows him to cut the plants free of the overhead cables and ropes. Karen's sons, Kyle and Taylor Ducharme, and a neighbor are helping with the harvest. After they are harvested from their vines, the hops come up into a drying cabinet — called an oat — for eight hours. After drying out to eight-to-ten percent moisture content, the hops can be stored in a cooling unit for an extended period. Next, the hops are put into a hopper, which stirs them and deposits them onto a conveyor belt. The belt feeds them to a hammer-mill, which pulverizes them. Another conveyor-

See HOPS, Page Five

## Water Quality Monitoring Not Just an Issue for Hardwick Schools

by Doug McClure

**HARDWICK** — According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), several public water systems in our area have been issued violations for excessive coliform bacteria, which are indicator organisms, meaning their presence indicates the possibility of disease-causing bacteria in the water. Many have also been cited for monitoring violations.

It is important to remember the data on water safety is at best incomplete. The EPA says it is "aware of inaccuracies and under-reporting

of some data in the Safe Drinking Water Information System. We are working with the states to improve the quality of the data."

The EPA maintains a Safe Drinking Water Information System (SDWIS), which contains information about public water systems and their violations of EPA's drinking water regulations. The list is not completely accurate; several local systems appear to be missing from the database.

Bearing in mind the Safe Drinking Water Information System's limitations and inaccuracies, the following is the EPA's status report

on local water systems:

**Cabot Town:** A violation of maximum contaminant levels for coliform bacteria was issued in December 2014 that was resolved to state compliance in August, 2015.

**Calais Elementary School:** EPA records show a violation for failure to test for lead in October, 2016. The last reported action was a state technical assistance visit in November, 2016.

**Craftsbury Elementary:** A violation was issued in December 2014 for coliform bacteria. It was resolved by January 2015.

**East Calais:** The state issued a

notice of violation for failure to test for lead in the water on November 16, 2016, after an initial compliance failure in October.

**Greensboro:** A notice of violation was issued in November, 2016 for failure to test for E. Coli.

**Hardwick:** A notice of violation for coliform bacteria was issued in June, 2015, and state compliance was achieved in October, 2015.

**Greensboro:** A violation was issued in July, 2015 for coliform bacteria, which resulted in a boil water order. Compliance with the state was achieved six months later. The See MONITORING, Page Ten

## Great Hosmer Pond Rule Change on Hold

by Doug McClure

**CRAFTSBURY** — The Agency of Natural Resources (ANR) Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) draft rule restricting the use of Great Hosmer is on hold for the moment.

The next step in enacting the change is to submit the text of the proposed new rule to the Legislative Committee on Administrative Rules (LCAR). According to DEC

Commissioner Emily Boddeker, the new rule was not admitted to LCAR in August; the deadline for submission to get on the agenda for the next LCAR meeting in September is.

"We need to be talking about solutions and not just raising objections to other uses of the pond. I deliberately released the draft rule in advance of formal rulemaking to spark conversation about this rule and other potential solutions," Bo-

ecker wrote in a DEC communication.

The comments the ANR received range from eliminating commercial use of the pond altogether to "ban all motorboats," according to the release.

The draft ruling seems to have exacerbated a decades-old conflict. Chittenden County's State Attorney Sarah George became a lightning rod in the process by advocating the rule change early on.

"Somebody needed to step in and set a rule," said East Calais resident Conrad Carey, who owns property on the pond. "Sarah George got a bad rap. (Sarah) is not maliciously oriented it is just not true. Someone had to stand up for us and she did."

The other side in the argument asks where we can go out there. "The other side in the argument says that we can't rule out the use of Craftsbury Outdoor Center's See HOSMER, Page Ten

## Final First Friday Finishes with Fiery and Frosty Finale

by Michael Bielawski

**HARDWICK** — A chilly First Friday attracted a few dozen music fans in front of the Hardwick Inn for live music and hot food, with many more passing through. About a dozen vendors took part. "At least it's not raining," event organizer Larry Hamel said. He was happy to chat and hang out with Hardwickians and out-of-towners throughout the evening.

The band for the evening was Senior Moment, the longtime standard-bearer for live music and folk music at First Fridays. Another big draw was a solar-powered bouncy house, set up by Sun Common, with several kids in a time burning off sugar-calories while parents enjoyed the event. One of the biggest new attractions to First Friday was Wicked Tasty Food, a retired full-sized school bus that is painted purple. The "restaurant" served American classics, as well as noodle bowls, to hungry visitors.

"I wanted to work for myself," co-See FRIDAY, Page Five

photo by Vanessa Fournier Right, Fire Spinner Jude Elford, of Walden, performed to music after dark on First Friday, September 1.



photo by Vanessa Fournier Larry Gilbert (right), of Zoombines in East Montpelier, explains how an electric bike works to Margot Eastman. The presentation was part of the September 2 electric vehicle event hosted by the Craftsbury Farmers Market and the Craftsbury Energy Committee.

## Cold Weather Tests Resilient Farmers' Market

by Michael Bielawski

**HARDWICK** — Tough weather has tested vendors at the weekly Hardwick Farmers' Market all season long, starting with the first half of the season when it rained almost every week. The weather has been very wet for most of August, but now it is getting cold. On Friday, temperatures hovered in the fifties.

"Today's been tough," market manager Carey Crozier said of last week's Friday's market. "The weather has been tough, for sure."

Crozier used to be a vendor herself, selling Korean kimchi and other jarred products before taking over the market manager last year. She offered a couple of other reasons, besides the weather, why things may have slowed down.

"People don't have to come here for groceries," she said.

She said today organic foods have earned spots in most mainstream grocery stores, perhaps lessening the need for the markets.

Crozier pointed out an increased presence of farmers' markets, including at Craftsbury, Greensboro,

and Morrisville. Often many of the same vendors appear at these weeks.

However, she said, there are still great reasons to take part. "It's still a great place for small businesses to come in and test the waters," she said, "and it's been overheard compared to starting a store."

There were still bright spots and happy vendors on Friday. A band played live string music, kids rode bikes on the pump track, and local vendors mingled and chatted. A handful of vendors shared their reports.

"It's been alright," Beaumont DeWan, owner of Nepali Himalayan Cuisine, said. "Hardwick is always the best; the people are always supportive."

DeWan's business has been a staple for fried rice, veggies, curry, meats, samosas, and more over for five years at the market.

Barbara Hughes, of Pinebrook Farm, in Westfield sells jams, preserves, pickles, and other products for five years and counting.

"Amaze!" she said. "That's OK See MARKET, Page Ten

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