

RITA In Action!

Wonders of the Wetlands

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Resilient Indiana Technicians are encouraged to strengthen education and outreach within their Districts, and the beginning of the school year is one of the busiest times to do so. Fall brings a wave of field trips for students of all ages, keeping Districts actively planning and presenting environmental programs for their county schools. This year marked the 36th year that Wonders of the Wetlands took place at the Duke Energy plant in Cayuga, IN. The two day experience was put on by Purdue Extension for 8th grade students from Vermillion and Parke County schools to attend and learn all about wetlands.

These students will travel around the Duke Energy plant to eight different stations learning all about different types of conservation topics that are related to the wetlands, with hands-on activities at most stations. RITA Tech Hanna, had the opportunity to help out Vermillion and Parke County SWCD's with their hydrology station. Here, the students explored where household water comes from, whether from wells, reservoirs or city systems. By comparing these sources, they began to see the vital connection between clean water and daily life.



The students then broke off into groups and created their own water filtration system filtering water taken from the river right behind the



station. They were given different tools they could use to build their filtration systems such as, sponges, small river rock, cotton pads and balls, rubber bands, fabric and a coffee filter. Once they were confident in their filters they were to filter the water through it as many times as they seemed necessary.

At the end of the activity, groups compared their results, proudly showing off their cleaner water their homemade filters produced. While some designs worked better than others, every student

walked away with a deeper understanding of how water filtration works and why it matters.

By blending science, engineering and environmental education, Wonders of the Wetlands offered students an unforgettable experience. Programs like this not only teach conservation topics but also spark curiosity that can inspire the next generation.