

Standing by for lift-off and a bid to build world's largest water rocket

BOFFINS from the National Physical Laboratory will be fizzing with excitement as they attempt their annual water rocket challenge.

On Wednesday, June 15, residents of all ages are being invited to join the scientists as they take part in the event, at the laboratory in Queens Road, Teddington.

Last year, more than 1,500 rockets were launched by teams of local schools, youth groups, families and individuals.

The schools-only competition will take place from 1.30pm until 5pm, and the evening competitions, which are open to all, will start at 6pm.

Staff at the laboratory will also be trying to set a world record for the largest water rocket launched, which will be built from over 100 fizzy-drink bottles.

All proceeds will go towards Shooting Star CHASE, the children's hospice service that supports children and teenagers not expected to reach their 19th birthday.

The water-rocket challenge has



COUNTDOWN: This was one of more than 1,500 rockets launched last year

Photo National Physical Laboratory

been running since 2003, and has helped raise more than £10,000 for charity.

To register or for more information, visit www.npl.co.uk/waterrockets.

NEWS

We have lift-off...

NPL SET A WORLD RECORD AS IT SUCCEEDS IN LAUNCHING THE WORLD'S LARGEST WATER ROCKET

By RUPERT BASHAM

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BUILT from more than 100 plastic bottles, the world's largest water rocket was launched into the sky over Bushy Park last week.

The National Physical Laboratory (NPL) held its

annual water rocket challenge on Wednesday, when it invited residents and schools to build and fire their own rockets.

This year, more than 820 rockets were launched, with varying degrees of success, with awards given out in categories such as best launching mechanism, best wing design, longest time in the

air and best overall engineering. The Mayor of Richmond, Councillor Clare Head presented the prizes.

During the event, staff at the NPL also set the world record for the largest water rocket launched. The event raised more than £2,500 for The Shooting Star CHASE Children's Hospice.



IT'S IN THE BAG: (Left) Richmond mayor Councillor Clare Head with the record-beating rocket, and (above) it blasts off into the sky Contributed

How it works

THE NPL staff's world-record-beating rocket measured 11ft long.

It was created from plastic bottles and with aerodynamic nose cones and fins, the rocket is part filled with water and air is then pumped in with a foot pump. When the rocket is released, the pressure inside pushes the water out, propelling it skywards.

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Lift-off:
The missile
takes to the
skies

Bottle rocket's a splash hit

Young scientists have launched what was thought to be the largest water rocket the world has ever seen.

Enthusiasts made the 3.4m missile from 100 fizzy drinks bottles for the National Physical Laboratory's (NPL) water rocket challenge, in Teddington.

More than 50 teams from around the country put their science skills to the test in a bid to keep their design in the air the longest and control the accuracy of its landing.

Schools, youth groups and families made a staggering 820 missiles for the event, which

raised more than £2,500 for the Shooting Star Children's Hospice, Hampton.

NPL believed the biggest entry set a world record for the largest water rocket launched.

Richmond mayor Councillor Clare Head awarded prizes for best overall engineering, launch mechanism, wing design and longest time in the air, along with the most impressive uniforms, banners and crowd-pleasing efforts.

Team Infinity and Beyond, from Broadwater School, Godalming, won the schools' competition, while Team Nano Express won the open event.