

Water Pollution

Water is the most important natural resource on Earth. All living things need it to survive. It also helps us in many other ways. It helps us cook our food and clean our dishes, carries away sewage, and provides us with power. Water is easy to take for granted because it is found all over. However, the truth is, the fresh water we need to survive is a limited resource. There is only a certain amount of it on Earth.

Water pollution has a negative impact on our fresh water supply. Pollution comes from many sources. Sewage and fertilizers run off into lakes. This can cause algae and bacteria to grow, which then kill fish, plants, and other animals. Chemicals from plants and vehicles can also pollute water supplies and make them unsafe for drinking. These water pollutants can kill people, plants, and animals. They can cause different diseases that affect populations.

Laws have been created to reduce the effects of water pollution. The Clean Water Act was passed in 1977 and updated in 1987. The Environmental Protection Agency is the group responsible for making sure these laws are followed. They do their best to make sure that states are keeping their water supplies clean.



Project

Conduct an experiment to see what is hiding in the water near you.

Materials

- a small, glass jar
- a rubber band that fits snugly around the opening of the jar
- cheesecloth or a coffee filter
- magnifying glass
- paper
- pencil

Directions

1. Use the jar to carefully collect a small sample of water from a nearby creek, pond, lake, or stream. Write down what you think you will find in the water.
2. Place the cheesecloth over the top of the jar.
3. Secure it in place with the rubber band.
4. Slowly pour the water through the cheesecloth into the sink.
5. Pull the cheesecloth off the jar.
6. Spread it open on a table and look at it carefully with your magnifying glass. What types of things do you see? Do you see any pollution on the cloth? Record your observations and compare them to your predictions.

