

Environmental Protection Agency

In the 1960s, Americans became concerned about the state of the environment. Pollution was increasing. There was smog over most major cities. Pesticides were overused and leaching into lakes and rivers. Fish were dying. People were getting sick from the pollution. Citizens asked the government to help find a solution for the environmental crisis we were facing.

In 1970, Richard Nixon answered the call for help and created the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA is responsible for creating standards for a healthy environment. They enforce their rules by inspecting different locations, such as big companies. They ensure the rules are being followed to help protect our environment. One example of the legislation that has been passed and is enforced by the EPA is the Clean Air Act. This helps reduce smog and other air pollution in cities by limiting the amount of pollutants that can be put into the air by factories, vehicles, and other sources.

The EPA is not just a lawmaking group. They also conduct environmental research. They work to find new solutions to problems in the environment, such as water pollution and climate change. The EPA can also help fund volunteer organizations and schools that want to work toward improving the environment. They do this by providing grants to these groups.



Project

See how pesticides and other chemical pollutants spread in lakes and rivers.

Materials

- a clear plastic or glass pan
- water
- food coloring (several different shades)
- Water Pollution Observation Sheet
- pencil

Directions

1. Fill the pan about 2/3 full with water.
2. Put the pan on a desk or table.
3. Let the water settle until it is still.
4. On your Water Pollution Observation Sheet, mark the time in column one. Then, write a sentence telling what your plain water is like.
5. Once the water has settled, place several drops of food coloring into the water at each of the four corners of the pan.

For the Teacher

Make one copy of the Water Pollution Observation Sheet (page 44) per student.
Write a paragraph summing up your observations on your observation sheet.

6. Write the time on the next line in column one and your observation in column two. Leave your pan alone for five minutes. Then, go back to the pan and record what you see. Do this every five or ten minutes for an hour with different food coloring, recording your observations each time.
7. How is the "pollution" spreading? Quickly? Slowly? Are the different "types" mixing together?

Name _____

Water Pollution Observation Sheet

Time	Observation

How is the "pollution" spreading? Quickly? Slowly? Are the different "types" mixing together? Write a paragraph summing up your observations.
