

How Does Water Become Polluted?

Getting Started



What Can Be Learned?

This activity illustrates the many things that can contribute to water pollution. It is a good way of showing that it may not be just one obvious source that causes pollution, and that even small things can contribute to a big problem.

Material; Needed

A clear jug - half full of water.
Pollutants - soil, soap, detergent, cigarette butts, oil.

The Activity

This activity can be for the whole class or a smaller group.

Hold up the jug of clean water. Who would drink this water? Does it look clean?

A lot of things get added to our rivers and creeks without us ever seeing them go in.

Lets see what might happen to this water...

A farmer might cut down and remove some trees from his land along the river bank. The trees are no longer there to hold the soil in place. Dirt might start to slip into the river (add dirt to the water).

A camper or fisherman might wash their hands in the river and use soap (add soap suds).

Detergent might wash into the river from people washing their cars (add detergent).

Cigarette butts might wash down drains, be washed down by rain, or thrown into the river (add cigarette butts).

Fuel from boats may be washed into the water - so might oil from nearby roads or from old oil drums being put into the water (add oil).

Discussion:

Who would drink this water now?
If our water was like this, who or what would not be able to use it any more?
Why is our water precious?
How can we look after it better?



This activity is often referred to as A River's Story and is widely accredited to various environmental education agencies.

