

Let's Clean Up

- 80% of water pollution is not from factories but from what people do everyday -- pesticides, crops and lawns, cars and factories, airborne pollutants, oil spills, pouring hazardous waste down our sinks, toilets or storm drains.
- Since human and animal bodies are 2/3 water, if the water isn't clean, all living things are at risk.
- Humans and animals can be made sick from problems further down the food chain who have compromised the water.
- Polluted ground water can cause death to the creatures that live in it as well as disease to humans resulting in death.
- What are some things we could all do to help not pollute the water? (After discussing this for few minutes, continue --)
- The Earth helps with polluted water as well. It has its own way of cleaning polluted water.
- It is the wetlands way.
- Wetlands have shallow standing water or, at the very least, wetlands are soggy some of the time.
- Marshes, swamps, tidal flats, prairie potholes, and bogs are all types of wetlands.
- Wetlands are habitats with a lot of life in them that do a great job of cleaning our water and preventing flooding. They act like giant sponges holding back the water to clean it as it slowly passes through.
- Wetlands help handle erosion in US but ½ of the wetlands are being destroyed by building homes, businesses, and recreation areas.

Things you can do in your own home to help protect the water:

Phosphate free laundry detergent

Ammonia, vinegar and baking soda as household cleaners

Avoid pesticides, weed killers and chemical fertilizers

Never dump paint, oil, or chemicals down the drain, in your house or the storm drain in your area.

SPONGE - Wetlands Activity

- Fill a jar with 8 cups of water. Show the kids.
- Add 2/4 tablespoons of dirt and shake up well.
- Wet a sponge and lay it at one end of the plastic container.
- Pour the dirty water over the WET sponge very slowly and then tip dish so water runs to the bottom of dish and collect in second jar.
- Compare the jar with dirt in it and the jar where water has run through the sponge.
- This is what a wetland does.