

Water pollution assignment



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There are many causes for pollution. It may be natural and it can also be caused by human activities. The big causes for marine pollution are oil spills, sewage and toxic wastes such as chemical and radioactive wastes. Oil comes to the water usually by accidental spills from ships, tankers, pipelines, and leaking underground storage tanks. There is no doubt that oil and chemical products are poisonous to the inhabitants of the seas, lakes, oceans, or water storage sites. Most oil spills are reported to be “accidental”, but a majority of the time they really aren't. 2% of oil spills comes from accidents while the remaining 70% comes from the daily routine of ships to dispose of oils. What makes it destructive is the huge amount of oil being dispersed to the sea. The disaster has killed thousands of animals and birds as well as plants. Approximately over 1 sea otters and birds are killed due to oil spills. Several billion salmon and herring eggs are also believed to have been destroyed. Milton Marie explains ‘the oil attracts to fish because it looks like looting food; this is dangerous for the sea birds which are attracted to schools of fish and may dive through oil slicks to get to the fish. . Similarly, in articles “Oil Spills,” Cooper Mary states that ‘the first obvious victims are birds and other aquatic wildlife that live along the shoreline. Birds cannot distinguish between clean water and an oil slick. ” Sewage is another example of how pollution can affect us all. It is the term used for wastewater that often contains feces, urine and laundry waste that comes from bathing, washing and cleaning by residential and commercial buildings. In many poor areas of the world, sewage is dumped into local waterways, in the absence of practical alternatives.

Sewage discharged into coastal waters can cause health hazards to people who usually bathe or surf in the water. People might swallow polluted water caused by improper sewage disposal resulting in several illnesses. It is also poisonous for some marine animals like shellfishes such as cockles and mussels that grow near the shore. People who have eaten poisoned shellfishes contaminated by sewage can suffer an acute and sometimes fatal illness called paralytic shellfish poisoning.

Chemical and radioactive wastes are some of the factors that contribute to the destruction of the aquatic systems. Chemical wastes that come from cleaning detergents, agricultural chemicals such as fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides, other heavy metal materials that contain arsenic, cadmium, chromium, copper, nickel, lead and mercury and a highly toxic chemical called tributyltin (TBT) contribute to the vast growing pollution of watery bodies. Tributyltin was used in paints to protect boats from the ravaging effects of the oceans.

Ironically, however, TBT was gradually recognized as a pollutant: boats painted with it were doing as much damage to the oceans as the oceans were doing to the boats. These chemical wastes come from the result of human activities and other natural occurrences such as weathering of soils and rocks and from volcanic eruptions. People who eat fishes exposed to these chemicals will be poisoned. Radioactive wastes are nuclear wastes produced from industrial, medical and scientific processes that use radioactive material.

Radiation causes death to marine animals. Oil spills, sewage and toxic wastes such as chemical and radioactive wastes are some of the main factors that contribute to the devastation of the aquatic ecosystem. In conclusion, it is clear to everyone the problems that cause water pollution. It doesn't only affect living things for a short term but has long lasting effects that can take years or centuries to clean up. Everyone needs to be more concerned with our water supply and products that can threaten it.