

# Prevent Water Pollution

Read about how water can get dirty.

Find the purple words in the paragraph. Label the pollution in the picture.

## Rivers, Streams and the Ocean

You can't dip your cup into a stream and take a drink without danger of getting sick. A lot of streams contain bacteria from overloaded or **damaged septic tanks** and from **animal poop**.

This bacteria is be removed in the **water treatment process**. **Dirt and gravel** from road and home construction sites can muddy the streams, damaging habitat for water animals.

If the water is too muddy, the water agencies have to stop pumping until the water clears. **Paint and chemicals** from building projects, nitrates from **fertilizers, garden chemicals, garbage, and car products** can all flow into streams and storm drains. This **polluted** water eventually flows to the ocean where we play and where many animals live. We can protect our surface water and ocean by using the **least toxic materials** possible around our homes and by taking used **hazardous materials**, such as paint, batteries, and light bulbs, to household hazardous waste stations.

## Aquifers

The greatest danger to wells near the coast is **seawater intrusion**. Aquifers can also be **contaminated** from agricultural fertilizers, and toxic chemicals from leaking fuel and chemical storage tanks. What can we do to prevent aquifer contamination?

## Tap Water

The water that comes out of your tap is safe to drink. It has been filtered, treated, and tested in a lab to make sure there are no pollutants. If water agencies find that the water they are taking out of a well or stream is contaminated, they must close that well or stop taking water from that stream.

Please help keep our water clean.

**Home Activity:** Take any chemicals (house paint, batteries, and light bulbs) that you no longer need to one of the local hazardous waste programs. Call 831.454.2606 for hours and locations. If you're in Watsonville call 831.768.3133.