

Pollution

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Glossary

acid chemical that reacts easily with other substances

acid rain rain that contains acids from pollution and that harms living things and buildings

air pollution when pollutants are added to the air

biodegradable able to be broken down, or decomposed

chemical substance that is used to produce a change in matter or that is formed when two or more kinds of matter act upon one another

conservation saving and wise use of natural resources

ecosystem all the interacting living and nonliving things in an area

filter to strain or remove harmful things from water or air

food chain way of describing who eats what in an ecosystem

fossil fuels fuels that formed in Earth over millions of years; for example, coal, oil, and natural gas

global warming increase in Earth's average temperature

greenhouse effect trapping of the sun's heat in Earth's atmosphere by carbon dioxide and other gases

groundwater water that seeps into the ground and is stored in spaces between rocks

groundwater quality how safe groundwater is for people to use

incinerator furnace for burning waste

land pollution when pollutants are added to the land

light pollution artificial light that causes problems for people and wildlife

natural resource material from Earth that people use

noise pollution loud or constant noise that bothers people and can affect health

nonrenewable resource natural resource that cannot be replaced once it is used

ozone gas that is a form of oxygen; forms a protective layer high above Earth but can be a pollutant if near Earth's surface

pollutant harmful substance in the air, land, or water

pollution damage done to the environment by the introduction of pollutants

reclamation returning land to a good or useful condition

recycle to treat or change waste so it can be used again

renewable resource natural resource that can be replaced as it is used

sanitary landfill place where solid waste is buried under layers of soil

smog a kind of air pollution caused by exhaust gases reacting with sunlight; also, a combination of smoke and fog

thermal pollution pollution of water by adding heat to it

water pollution when pollutants are added to the water

wetland land that is wet most or all of the year; for example, swamps, marshes, and bogs