

Clean Water Campaign/ Water Smart Essay Contest



Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth graders from Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton and Gwinnett Counties participated in the essay contest where they were asked to write about the connection between water quality and water conservation.

Congratulations to:

HARRIS HOWARD

of Fulton Science Academy in Fulton County

for your essay that explores the important issues of water quality and conservation

**Harris Howard
Fulton Science Academy**

Water is a vital part of life. It is critical that communities, industry, agriculture, and the environment receive a continued supply of high quality water but to not overuse this water supply. When it rains; rather than getting into the soil, the water flows quickly off roads and roofs. *It picks up oil, grease, heavy metals, and trash from roads, sediment from construction sites and pesticides and fertilizers from lawns. The rain erodes away at the streams and is heavier because it is carrying all of these materials. The rain that was once a helper is now a killer.

Now people are noticing these things and are participating in many events to help the environment. There is so much that we can do by participating in some of the following; * buy "green" products labeled non-toxic, non-phosphate or water-soluble, dispose of household products properly, don't litter, plant natural vegetation to control erosion, recycle yard waste, clean up pet waste, leave native vegetation and trees alongside streams. Anyone can also help out by participating in Clean and Beautiful groups to help clean highways, gutters, and catch basins. Also the people of Atlanta can participate in Adopt-A-Stream where you clean up a stream and learn about it at the same time. These are only some of the ways people can help out there are millions of things that anyone could do and any contribution could help.

Even though we try so hard to improve things it really is not getting any better. The water is in short supply and the quality of the water is worsening as time goes on. But there have been water reforms that have helped the balance of sharing water. These water reforms however have not helped to situation at all though. We are seeing this horrible cycle of pollution and we must stop it right here, right now.

I believe that we need to establish river management comities where the local community has a say in the management of its rivers, monitoring environmental conditions, and preparing more water conservation strategies. The government needs to pass more and more water reforms † ensure the safety of our water. If this were not to happen, there could be some drastic changes in our lives. Imagine not getting to swim in local lakes because it could kill a person. These are the only ways we would be able to help this situation.

What this all boils down to is one thing, that not only our children or our children's children and us will be able to drink water that has not been contaminated at all. They will drink from water that will not be used out of control. The world is now having wars about oil but what if we were to start having wars about clean fresh water. The world would become a horrible place and hopefully someone will come along and stop it now, for good.

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Congratulations to:

LAURA FRISBIE

of Shamrock Middle School in DeKalb County

for your essay that explores the important issues of water quality and conservation

Laura Frisbie
Shamrock Middle School

The United States Environmental Protection Agency Makes the case that there is a strong link between conservation and water quality. Wasting water requires us to build more dams and reservoirs to meet the growing demand for water. Dams and reservoirs increase pollution by holding in sediments and chemicals. The debris from building reservoirs and dams can pollute nearby streams and rivers. Another pollution problem comes from the irrigation of crops. Over irrigating crops can lead to runoff that carries with it pesticides and other harmful chemicals. The excess water pollution can alter the temperature of the water, decrease the oxygen in the water, and increase the bacteria and viruses. Dams, reservoirs, and irrigation also deprive streams of most of their water, which can destroy or alter wetlands and other animal habitats. Because of this, it is important that we conserve water before the wetlands and their inhabitants are gone forever.

Each resident of Atlanta can and should contribute in some way to conserve and improve the quality of our water. At home, you could take shorter showers with a low flow showerhead. When you use your dishwasher or washing machine, wash only full loads. If you have a leaky faucet or toilet, fix it (15 gallons of water a day or 5,475 gallons of water a year can be wasted by a leaky toilet or faucet). Don't run water while you are brushing your teeth, shaving, or washing your hands. And don't waste 5 gallons of water flushing a tissue, cat litter, or some other trash down your toilet. Conserving water is not limited to the inside of your house. Your choice of landscaping can help conserve water. Use plants native to your area in your landscaping choices. Water your plants only when they need it (you can kill your plants from over watering). Plus, do not run your sprinkler to entertain your kids; send them up to the neighborhood pool. It is not hard to follow these rules. I know, because my whole family follows them.

Besides conserving your water, you can help with river pollution by becoming a volunteer at a number of organizations that clean up rivers. (My Georgia History class is helping to clean up a local stream on October the 11th). It does not take much to change our rivers (for the better), but you have to do your part. You might be thinking that it is too much work, and it doesn't matter if the Chattahoochee glows at night or not. It does matter; what you do to your water today will be the water you live with tomorrow.

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Congratulations to:

VIDUR VOHRA

of Simpson Middle School in Cobb County

for your essay that explores the important issues of water quality and conservation

Why We Should Conserve Our Water Vidur Vohra

20 years from now, Jim and Chris were walking home from school one day unable to decide what to do with the afternoon. At the same moment they thought of going to the local pool. Then, just realizing it they remembered that the local swimming pool was closed because of the water shortages. With that out of their minds, they tried to think of something else. After awhile, Jim thought of going playing with the water balloons he just bought last weekend. Chris sadly said that they can not do that because of the water restrictions. This did not stop Jim, for he always thought of ideas. He said instead of using home water they could use water from the nearby stream. The again, Chris always watched the five o'clock news and was up to date. Chris said that the stream was not usable because many people dumped their trash in the stream. This situation will be the future if we don't conserve water and don't stop polluting rivers and streams.

In the future, we will have many problems if we do not conserve water. People will be fined just for trying to give their plants some water. Kids will get in trouble for having water balloon and gun fights. It might be so bad that every house in the city can only use a certain amount of water a day. If they go over it they will be fined. Nobody would like to live in this type of country. The amount of people in Cobb county would decrease. Pollution will along with restrictions will be affect everything. Things from tourism, property value, and taxes. Tourism will decrease because less water can be used. People usually come to see Lake Lanier. With less water to use stream, rivers, and lakes will be used up. Also less people will come because they might think that they will get sick from the water. Property value will fall because plants and grass will die and property will look bad. Then the value of Cobb will fall. With that streams that are polluted, will flood when there are heavy rainfalls. Then the pollutant will go into the soil making it sterile. Finally, taxes will increase. The county administrators will have to increase taxes to make new canals, lakes, reservoirs, and related. Most of these problems do not affect us now, but they will in the future. Remember Chris and John. Kids who have nothing to do, and can not have fun. Of course, people can plan for the future and prevent this.

In the near future, everybody will have to conserve water and stop polluting water. Simple things can help. Some are not running the water when brushing. This could save a tremendous amount of water. Taking shorter baths is another thing. People do not have to waste water. Many people also should not wait for hot water. That could take a long time and waste water. Rain water is not used at all. Most of it fall on lawn and just flow off the ground. People can use the rain water. They can save it in barrels for the lawn. They could also design a garden that takes advantage of the rain. All the water will be used for the grass or the plants. Lastly, people can not just waste water! They should use common sense. If they think that they are wasting water, they should stop.

If Jim and Chris were living now, they could play with water. Even though we are not in that situation, we son could be. Everyone should do there part and save water. If some observe others polluting, they should report to the police. Who would want the future generations live in trash and drought. If people just conserve, everyone will have water to use for whatever they wish. When people waste water, they should remember Jim ,Chris, their health, and the future generations.

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Congratulations to:

RACHEL DELGAUDIO

**of Trickum Middle School in Gwinnett County
for your essay that explores the important issues of water quality and conservation**

**Water: Our Drought and Our Dump
By Rachel DelGaudio**

In Georgia, we are in a terrible drought. Our water level is far below what it should be. The drought has been going on for many years, and no matter how much, how long, and how hard it rains, the drought is not getting much better. Even though the state knows what a huge problem the drought is for its citizens, people do not seem to understand that we are making the matter worse. Every day hundreds of trees are cut down, whether it is for paper, space for houses, or to build an office building. Every tree that is cut down hurts our oxygen supply, and, whether you believe it or not, it hurts our supply of water. When it rains, all of the water that has fallen into an area that has been clear-cut is absorbed into the soil. That water is now gone, and we will not be able to get it back. An area that is covered in forest, however, will disperse back through photosynthesis. Carbon dioxide is taken in through the leaves, and the water that has been absorbed by the earth is taken in through the roots. The water and the carbon dioxide are turned into oxygen and glucose. These two chemicals are then, through respiration, turned back into carbon dioxide and water. The water is in the form of water vapor and is absorbed into the air. All we must do to prevent this sort of thing from happening is to stop clear-cutting so much land.

As well as a low level of water, we also have polluted water. There are many pollutants, but two of the major pollutants are dirt and bacteria. Dirt is the number one cause of pollution. This is because when it rains the banks are eroded away and the dirt falls into the streams. Also, when people or animals walk along the banks, they push dirt off the edges. The dirt crushes the macro-invertebrates that are in the stream. The dirt can also pull off eggs of invertebrates living in the water off the rocks. The second main cause of pollution in streams is bacteria. The bacteria are mainly coming from sewage treatment plants, failing septic systems, and livestock operations.

There are a few ways that communities are dealing with these problems. There really is not much that the community can do about the dirt pollution. People are trying to disturb the land as little as possible. Construction workers are using items such as bails of hay and silt fences, and farmers are trying new methods of farming to help the pollution. With the sewage pollution, the cities are upgrading sewage treatment plants, education about septic tanks are provided for the citizens, owners of livestock have developed better ways of disposing of their animals' manure, and it has become a law that pet owners must clean up after their pets.

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Congratulations to:

DAPHNE VINCENT
of M.D. Roberts Middle School in Clayton County
for your essay that explores the important issues of water quality and conservation

Daphne Vincent • M.D. Roberts Middle School
"Save Water! Protect the Future!"

Water is one of the most abundant, but indispensable chemical compounds on the surface of the earth. It covers nearly 70% of the earth's surface, and every living thing depends on it in one way or the other. But, even though there is so much water on the earth's surface, the water we can actually use is very finite and limited. There is never enough to waste, or in some situations, there is never enough water at all.

We usually don't hear about it, but the water is being polluted constantly. Fertilizer manufacturing industries are releasing substances like nitrates and ammonia into streams. Wastewater is being released from sugar industries, meat-packing units etc. Sewage disposals from houses and garbage are being led into streams, and rivers, too. There are a lot of consequences to all of this pollution that has been going on. Due to the sewage going into the water, a lot of bacteria are present. During the older days, people could jump and play in rivers without any concern, but nowadays, we get ill if we do that because almost all of the rivers are polluted. We develop diseases like cholera, typhoid fever, dysentery etc. The rivers also start to develop algae, which create bad smell, bad color and might also harm aquatic life. Apart from that, we obviously can't use polluted water for our needs. Since most of the water is getting polluted very fast, our water sources are starting to decrease. That is one of the main reasons to stop polluting and start conserving.

We take water for granted. When we turn on the faucet, water flows out freely and that leads us to believe that everybody, everywhere gets as much water as we do, but they don't. Water is scarce in a lot of places in the world, and by polluting it, and wasting it, we are only making it scarcer. If we don't start conserving now, we are going to make our future, the future of the next generation, and so on, very hard, and complicated. We may even have trouble trying to find water we could drink and cook with, etc. We can stop ourselves from getting to that awful plight by conserving right now. Conserving water is a good defense against shortage, so we should conserve all the time, and not only when the need arises.

We can do small things around the house that can make a big difference for people around the world, ones in the future, and us. We could start by shutting the taps when we are not using them and taking shorter baths. We could make sure that the washing machine and the dishwasher have full loads in them before we turn them on. After all, these machines use lots of water, and you don't want to waste all that water just to wash one dish or one dress do you? Another thing we could do is put pieces of paper in the wastebaskets instead of flushing them down the toilet.

Outside the house, we could use brooms for cleaning sidewalks, etc. Using a hose to do that wastes hundreds of gallons of water. We could check for leaks every now and then, too. In the lawn, pull out the weeds so there is no competition for water. We could also stop watering our lawn during the heat of the day because that causes all the water to evaporate. Doing things like these inside and outside the house can bring about a considerable difference in the amount water we use and be very helpful.

Another way to stop polluting and start conserving would be to teach the little kids to stop polluting and start conserving. We could hold some session in which they can learn about conserving and have fun at the same time. A session where they can learn the harmful things that will happen to the earth if we pollute, and how we can save ourselves if we conserve. After all they are the future of this world.