

Protect Your Earth **ABCs**

Encourage your students to make a difference in their environment by taking action!

Adopt-a-stream, a park or your street and clean it up!

Buy things made from recycled materials and in bulk, when you can, to lessen packaging waste.

Curbit! bins are provided to area residents for recycling glass, cardboard, metal containers, plastic, and numerous paper products.

Discard old appliances by calling your garbage hauler and arranging to have them pick up and dispose of them properly.

Encourage your family to buy environmentally-friendly products that do not contain toxic chemicals.

Fix leaky pipes and faucets; they can waste up to 50 gallons of water a day!

Grass cycling means to leave grass clippings on your lawn as mulch for holding moisture in, so you do not need to water as often and also for reducing fertilizer needs.

Household hazardous materials (HHM) should never be poured down the drain or on the ground. Take them to the Regional Collection Center in Bondurant.

IOWATER is an Iowa Department of Natural Resources program that holds workshops all over the state for teaching persons how they can test the quality of the rivers, lakes and streams in their area. Check out their website at www.iowater.net to find out more about becoming a water monitoring volunteer in your community.

J*ust a Dream*, a book by Chris VanAllsburg, is the story of a boy's dream about the Earth becoming devastated by pollution – read it to your class as a great way to spur kids into action!

Kee*p Iowa Beautiful* is an organization dedicated to reducing litter in Iowa. Keep a litter bag in the car, pick up litter in the neighborhood park, in the street and your yard and driveway, so Iowa can continue to be a beautiful state! Check out their website at www.keeptowbeautiful.com/home.html for some ways you can help in Iowa.

Leave no trace whenever you go to a park or other public place. Many parks do not want garbage cans attracting flies, so they ask you to bring your own trash bag for carrying out waste with you.

Mugs and cups for holding beverages are a much better way to protect our environment than using disposable cups.

Number 1 and #2 plastic containers, like milk jugs and juice bottles, can be recycled.

Oil that has leaked onto the garage floor or driveway can be cleaned up by sprinkling it with cat litter or sawdust, sweeping it up, and throwing it in the trash. Check vehicles for oil leaks often and keep them in good repair. Take used oil to your automotive center for recycling.

Precycle - that means choosing products wisely before purchasing them - e.g. buy in bulk to save in amount of packaging materials, buy products that come in recyclable containers, buy products containing the least amount of extra packaging, take your own bag to the store, buy batteries and light bulbs that are “long-life,” read labels and choose products containing fewer harmful chemicals, buy fewer paper towels and napkins and use cloth rags and napkins instead, or buy products packaged in recycled materials.

Quality water is something all Iowans want. Do your part by working to keep trash, dirt, oil, fertilizer and pesticides out of Iowa’s waterways.

Runoff from yards, driveways, and streets goes directly to our storm sewers and rivers, so keep your property and neighborhood pollutant-free, especially when rain is predicted.

Soil is the #1 polluter of Iowa waterways. Plant grass, trees and shrubs to hold soil in place. Make sure construction sites in your neighborhood are using silt fences, tarps, or hay to prevent soil erosion during construction.

Turn off the water when brushing your teeth or washing the dishes by hand to conserve water.

Use and reuse paper, cloth, or plastic bags to cut down on waste going to landfills.

Volunteer to clean up litter in your neighborhood.

Weed the garden by hand instead of relying on pesticides and herbicides, harmful chemicals that can end up in waterways when it rains.

Xercise your freedom of speech and the right to speak out about problems in your environment – write a letter to the editor, report a problem to proper authorities, or share information with your class.

You can make a difference! Think about ways you can protect your environment and organize others to help.

Zero in on the pollution problems in your neighborhood and community and take action!