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## **What is Water Pollution**

All about water pollution

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# What is water pollution?

What is water pollution? Its answer is so simple. When water loses its natural composition owing to encroachment of any unwanted compound into it then it does not remain as pure water and called the polluted water. This alarming situation in the water is widely termed as the water pollution which literally means the poor quality of water.

Water pollution has become global issue. Wherever there is water, pollutants are contaminating it in one way or on another and are causing water pollution. On the two-third part of this planet there is water and rest of the one-third comprises of the land. It means the water pollutants are so huge in size and so harmful in effects that they are damaging the natural features of huge amount of water available in the world and depriving us of the opportunity to consume the pollution-free water.

All the sources of the water including oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, ponds, canals, streams etc are the worst hit of water pollution. The question arises here; who is polluting the water? Unfortunately we all human beings are contributing in one way or other, knowingly or unknowingly in polluting the water. It means all the human activities and their impacts are causing water pollution all across the globe.

A few decades ago there was no any serious threat of water pollution and as intense as it is nowadays. No doubt there was the problem of water contamination during older times but it was quite nominal. Thanks to the rapid industrialization and the urbanization all over the world which unleashed the menace of the water pollution. Does it mean the development is responsible for this havoc? Not at all; the unplanned and the disorganized development is the main cause of the all types of the pollution all around the world.

## Types of water pollution

Technically speaking there are two main types of the water pollution.

### Surface water pollution

The surface water is the entire amount of the water found in oceans, seas, rivers, lakes, stream etc. It may be further bifurcated into various categories according to its various other features like taste, place of storage etc. So wherever there is any sort of the contamination in the surface water it is called the surface water pollution which further be called individually as marine pollution, sea pollution, river pollution, lake pollution etc. On the basis of taste it may be divided into two categories one is drinking water pollution and the second one is salt water pollution.

You should also read the article [drinking water pollution](#).

## Groundwater pollution

The groundwater means the water available under the ground in aquifers. It is polluted by the human activities disperse all around the world which first contaminate the soil then its harms are shifted into the water at its bottom. Use of the chemical fertilizer and pesticide is the main source of soil contamination apart from dumping of the hazardous and chemical waste into the trench which flows into the groundwater. Similarly every polluting activity on land causes the ground water pollution. Most interestingly the industrial and vehicular emissions when suspend into the air, the rainfall takes them with water-flow into the various water bodies and its effects also persist in soil which ultimately add the pollution load on the groundwater.

## Causes of water pollution

There are multiple causes of water pollution which are in bulk all across the world and hold various harmful affects to disturb the original composition of the water. It is possible that some of these causes are less sever in an area but may be so intense in another area which offset its lesser effects somewhere else and equally mar the water to hold its natural characteristics.

## Sewage and wastewater

Entire civic affluent is called sewage. Its amount can be judged by the living beings on the world. If we take only humans as living beings then nearly six to seven billion people live on this planet. They consume water and then dispose it in various forms. That sewage and wastewater must be treated before its final disposal into the water bodies for its eventual reuse. But more than half of the domestic sewage and wastewater in the sixty percent countries of this world is directly dumped into the various water bodies more particularly into the seas. Disposal of the untreated sewage and wastewater into the sea has entirely changed the natural composition of marine environment resulting worst hit to the marine life and its ecosystem.

## Industrial effluent

It is the second hugest cause of the water pollution all around the world. Wherever there is human life there is demand for the consumption of goods and services. After the rise in standard of living and rapid mechanization every act of human being is done with the help of a machine or is facilitated or comforted with the help of a product. For this purpose manufacturing activities have shot up and numbers of industries and factories have increased astronomically.

The waste in liquid form as a result of the manufacturing activities is called the industrial effluent which is mostly directly dumped into the water bodies without any treatment. This practice is rife in backward and least developed countries. There are no borders of seas and

oceans therefore polluting by the factories of poor nations spread into the whole of a water body and all countries which touch it have to suffer from the harms of the water pollution.

### **Chemical waste**

The chemical waste is the all such waste which has more harms than the normal solid or civic waste. It is generated in the manufacturing process to produce chemical related products like paints, germicides, insecticides, pesticides, chemical fertilizers etc. Apart from this, in daily human activities a lot of chemical becomes part of the wastewater and sewage and it contributes rise in the water pollution. Just like the industrial effluent, most of the chemical waste all around the world is not treated through any scientific procedure - which is generally called a treatment plant - and is directly dumped into any nearby river or sea through open or covered drains. Owing to the absence of the stringent environmental laws this practice is common in poor countries while many advanced countries are also facing this violation by their manufacturing sectors.

### **Radioactive waste**

The waste generated in nuclear power plants is called radioactive waste. Owing to the strategic importance of such plants, most of the countries prefer to dispose off their radioactive waste directly into the sea because its amount is a signal for others to assess the level of production of a nuclear power plant of any country. No country wants the level of its nuclear activity may be leaked and hence disposes of its nuclear waste without getting it treated. If nuclear wastes concentrate at some specific spot of a water body, the consumption of the water from that spot may kill its consumers.

### **Thermal Pollution**

It is another main cause of the water pollution which is the result of the manufacturing activities of the power plants which first take the water from river or sea then bring it to the highest level of temperature for their manufacturing purpose and then directly release it to the water body and disturb the natural temperature of that water body. Owing to sudden rise in temperature water loses its many natural features and gets polluted.

You may also like our article [Thermal Pollution](#)

### **Oil spills**

Oil spills is common occurrence nowadays. It is not only the leakage of oil from the oil tanks of the ships or from the oil-carrying vessels but also the normal seepage of oil and fuel from vessels and large boats which entirely change the chemical composition of the water. Besides, oil spills from the factories located near a water body also add the pollution load into the water.

To read an informative article on Oil Pollution [click here](#)

## Plastic waste

If you have observed the beach cleaning campaign you must have observed that volunteers collect a lot of plastic bottles, packets, bags which otherwise flow into the sea. Though plastic does not dissolve into the water but it may affect the ecosystem of the marine life and therefore is equally harmful for the water.

You should also read our article [Beach Pollution](#)

## Effects of water pollution

The effects of the water pollution are horrendous. The number of daily deaths all across the world due to the consumption of the polluted water is in thousands and its count is rising day by day. Similarly sixty percent population of this world from the backward areas does not have direct access to the safe water. Seventy percent diseases in this world are related to water-borne diseases. The polluted water contains several harmful bacteria which directly hit the human health and cause many fatal diseases.

According to reliable surveys and reports, forty five percent of the world's population doesn't have proper sanitation and this count is rising continuously. Sewage disposal affects people's immediate environments and leads to water-related illnesses such as diarrhea that kills 3-4 million children each year. It is widely feared that water-related diseases could kill 135 million people by 2020.

The polluted water if consumed for the drinking purpose directly affects our entire body and its harmful bacteria if stay inside our body may result various fatal diseases. Therefore, it is necessary to once get complete medical checkup after the age of 30 years to know is there any harmful bacteria in the body due to the consumption of polluted water which is affecting our health. It is right that there is no such specific test for this purpose.

It is interesting to learn that world-famous Dr Hull's environmental expertise in removing chemicals polluting the environment showed her how to remove toxic chemicals polluting the human body. She offers the [Detox Kit](#) to teach you how to remove toxins using your body's water, urine, fecal waste, skin and blood. It is safe for all ages and health conditions because it is a natural process using the simple nutrition techniques and information.

## Water pollution control

Should we just read the sad stories of the water pollution and become so perturbed on how to get the pollution-free water and from where? Not at all; every one of us has to play his or her role. There are three ways to control water pollution.

## Awareness on water pollution

If you are a citizen and are fully aware of the harms of the water pollution, obviously you would avoid consuming the polluted water and in case of no choice you would try to use it after mitigating its negative effects like boiling it for thirty minutes before drinking such water.

If you are an industrialist and know the harms of the water pollution, you would never think to dispose off your industrial waste directly into a water body and would treat it before doing so. Similarly, if you are a public representative, you would force your government to make the laws punishing the polluters of water and devise the policies to make compulsory to treat all types of the waste and effluent before their final disposal.

So the public awareness is of vital important to make people act against the water pollution. For this purpose apart from the government, the media and civil society has to equally play their role to enhance the public awareness on harms of the water pollution.

## Laws to control water pollution

Mere public awareness can't work to stop a crime unless there are stringent laws to control it. Therefore, environment laws and their strict implementation are equally important to control the water pollution and anyone found polluting the water must be dealt with the iron hand.

## Top 5 steps to control water pollution

Top five steps to control water pollution can be taken everywhere but active participation of the stakeholders including industries, farmers, households, civic agencies and environmental watchdogs is must to make them successful. The sincerity in purpose and will power to take these steps are also must to mitigate the menace of water pollution which directly hits our digestive system and causes several gastro related diseases - apart from several others - in human beings and animals.

Top five steps to control water pollution are workable only if the four key players to implement them not only cooperate with each other but also take their implementation seriously. Merely lip service to resolve the problems of water pollution is not sufficient to keep our water free from any grey menace.

## Households

Out of five steps to control water pollution the one most important step relates to households. The entire wastewater generated from domestic use needs to be treated before its flow into the water bodies. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the civic agencies to treat the wastewater before its final disposal for reuse or its flowing into the water bodies as a reserve stock for the future use. However, in most of the poor countries in particular and in developing countries in

general the civic agencies complain of the excessive use of water by households which results production of wastewater beyond civic agencies' capacity to treat it before its final disposal. In view of this fact there is bounden duty of the communities to use water as less as possible to generate lesser quantity of wastewater to help civic agencies fully dispose it after treatment while staying within their capacity level.

## **Farmers**

The second key source of water pollution either fresh water pollution or salt water pollution is the agriculture runoff which is actually residual effluent of chemical fertilizer and pesticide mixed into irrigated water and then flows through the downward streams and canals into the river and seas. Farmers can play a lead role to contribute for its mitigation by shifting towards the use of natural fertilizer like their forefathers used to do so in the past and using less harmful or natural germicides to protect their crops.

## **Industries**

Industrial effluent and waste, if directly dumped or disposed off into the rivers or seas, is one of the biggest causes of the water pollution. So industries should release the effluent and wastewater after their treatment through combined or individual industrial effluent plant and dispose of the industrial waste into the designated landfill site. For this purpose they need cooperation of the civic agencies especially in disposal of industrial waste into the final destination.

## **Civic agencies**

In top five steps to control water pollution the role of civic agencies is of utmost importance for the treatment of wastewater before its disposal into the water bodies which if not done can become the biggest source of water pollution all across the world. Every civic agency must have all the facilities with their full capacity to treat the entire wastewater to make it reusable further or to make it harmless before flowing it into the water bodies. Moreover, proper disposal of the entire solid wastes of both residential and industrial areas is also duty of the civic agencies and they must install a system of solid waste management to keep our land environment free from the menace of pollution.

## **Environmental watchdogs**

Whenever and wherever there is violation of environmental laws either by households, industries, farmers or civic agencies environmental watchdogs which are mostly called environmental protection agencies must take action against such culprits. In all the developed countries and most of the developing and backward countries environmental protection agencies are working to protect the environment. But in poor countries they are toothless bodies which can't use their power owing to the clout and cartels of the polluters. Therefore,

there is pressing need empower them by to take action against all those who pollute the environment more particularly water environment of their area.

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