



Protecting Our Environment

Nine Ways To Keep Water Well

(NAPSA)—While there are about 326 million cubic miles of water on earth, only about three percent is fresh water and only one half of one percent is accessible. The rest of the fresh water is frozen in polar ice caps, trapped underground, or polluted.

According to Project WET (Water Education for Teachers), there is a critical need for water education, especially among kids, our future environmental stewards. "People have a limited knowledge about water. In fact, the majority of people do not recognize the definition of a watershed (a large area where rain and snow drain toward the same body of water), and almost a third don't know the source of their drinking water. Clearly people need to be educated about this precious resource," said Dennis Nelson, founder and executive director for Project WET, a not-for-profit water science and education program for students in grades K-12. "Learning that water is a natural resource that requires management helps everyone appreciate and understand their personal roles as water stewards."

Fortunately there are steps you can take at home to protect this precious resource.

- Use safe, non-toxic cleaning products such as baking soda for scrubbing and vinegar and water for cleaning windows.
- Don't pour toxic substances such as motor oil, leftover paint, household cleaners, pesticides or even some medicine down the drain.
- Participate in or organize a household hazardous waste collection day.
- Clean up after your pets so the waste does not run into nearby waterways.
- Participate in a river, pond or highway cleanup or organize one.
- If using lawn fertilizers or pesticides, follow the instructions. Excess lawn chemicals can infiltrate directly into ground water.
- Don't pour chemicals down storm drains. They empty directly into streams and rivers.
- If you live along a waterway, pond or lake, plant shrubbery along the edge to filter sediment and lawn chemicals before they reach the water.
- When washing your car, pull it on to the grass so soap doesn't run into the storm drain. (T)

More than 50,000 kids across the country learn about the importance of their role as water stewards each year through Project WET's "Make A Splash" festivals. With support from The Perrier Group of America, the one-day, simultaneous water education festivals feature a series of structured stations and exhibits educating students about such topics as the hydrologic cycle, ground water, spring water, water quality, wetlands, water management, water conservation, the cultural history of water and more.

"As a corporation, The Perrier Group (providers of Poland Spring, Arrowhead and other regional spring water brands) cares about water, children and education. We believe everyone has a role in protecting this limited resource," explained the company's president and CEO, Kim Jeffery.

For information on water workshops and teacher training or to participate in an online water festival, log onto www.projectwet.org, or to learn what you can do call Project WET at 406-994-5392.