



Solid Waste Disposal

Did you ever think about what happens when you throw an object in the trash? You probably know that a trash collector empties your trash into a large truck. But where does it go? Most of the **solid wastes** produced in cities and towns go to solid waste **landfills**. Landfills are special facilities that are built to contain waste in the ground.

A smaller portion of the solid wastes produced in cities and towns go to solid waste **incinerators**. These are facilities where solid waste is burned at very high temperatures. Fewer solids are left after burning. Therefore, burning reduces, or lessens, the amount of solid waste that must be buried.



Describe two different places that your trash can go when it is collected at the street.

How do landfills work?

There are different types of landfills. Waste from homes and schools goes to a *municipal solid waste landfill*. These landfills have strict government requirements to help prevent wastes from getting into the environment. The bottom and sides of the landfills have special liners that stop waste from getting into the soil or groundwater. Waste piles at landfills are **compacted**, or pressed down, by large machines. Any liquid that seeps out of the waste is collected and treated to remove harmful substances. Scientists frequently test the soil and water around landfills to be sure no wastes are leaking into the environment.

When waste breaks down in landfills, **methane gas** is produced. Methane gas can have harmful effects in the atmosphere. However, it can also be burned for fuel. Many newer landfills collect the methane gas and pipe it to locations where it is used as a fuel source.



NAME: _____

After You Read 



Waste and the Ocean

3. Explain how litter thrown on land can hurt animals in the ocean.

4. Explain two ways that oil can harm ocean animals.

1) _____

2) _____

Extension & Application

5. Make a poster to explain why students should help stop pollutants from entering the ocean. Be sure to include:

- how pollutants harm ocean animals
- ways in which pollutants get into the ocean
- ways that people can stop pollutants from getting into the ocean

Form or join a **clean-up group** to help stop pollutants from getting into the ocean. Your group can meet to pick up litter from beaches, streams, rivers, or parks. Be sure to have an adult help you, and find the right equipment to safely pick up and dispose of litter. Never use your bare hands.



Crossword Puzzle!



Across

1. used to kill insect pests
3. lets pollutants pass into air
5. _____ materials
7. containers, labels, etc.
9. waste from a product before it is bought
11. substance that tastes sour
13. matter that has definite shape and volume
15. rivers drain into the _____
17. place where solid waste is buried
18. manufactured item

The crossword puzzle grid consists of 18 numbered starting points for words. The grid is composed of white squares for letters and black squares for empty space. The numbers are placed in the top-left corner of the starting square for each word.

Down

1. packaging material made from petroleum oil
2. type of landfill for once-living waste
4. harmful to living things
6. process by which raw materials are made into products
8. another word for toxic
10. parts of a product that are no longer useful
12. facility where products are manufactured
14. facility where solid waste is burned
16. when harmful substances get into the environment