

SAVING THE PLANET

Years ago there wasn't a problem with rubbish because things like plastic and disposable nappies hadn't been invented. There wasn't so much packaging on items you bought either. But now, with everything so over packaged wrapped and disposable we are suffering the consequences of far too much waste. The trouble is not everything can be recycled or will rot away. You used to be able to get a refund on glass bottles when you took them back to the shop. Now they are either collected from your house by the council or you can take them to a bottle bank.

The fact that paper can be recycled and is easy to dispose of is great, but remember paper is made from trees, which are important to the environment. The rainforests have been slowly disappearing for a while now. We need them not just because it helps with the climate. They are important as like all plants they give us oxygen. They are also home to many animals who rely on them for their survival.

The best waste is organic, dead leaves; carrot tops, onion skins and so on all rot down and make fertile soil. In turn, this will help plants and vegetables by giving them much needed food. So if you can have a compost heap in your garden you'll be helping the environment and your garden will love you for it.

Acid rain is another serious problem; it is damaging to plants and is caused by pollutants such as sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxides. These come from the burning of coal, oil and gas.

Dropping litter is not just a lazy thing to do, it makes work for other people, is bad for the environment and looks ugly. So think before you drop litter: either bin it or keep it and then bin it.

When rivers and seas are polluted by the waste, we are not only stealing their beauty but we are spoiling it for ourselves too. Our health can also suffer. Sadly accidents do occur; oil slicks sometimes happen and wreck the environment. Animals tend to suffer the most from these incidents. We should have in place something that will prevent so much destruction, rather than just waiting for it to happen, then trying to clean up the damage.

Nuclear waste has been the cause of controversy over the years. Radioactive material leaking out would be very serious indeed, it can cause real harm. This is why it is the most worrying.

Although we are trying to stop the hole in the ozone layer getting any bigger, nuclear waste is still a serious problem. The ozone layer protects us from harmful ultraviolet rays. Its hole has been caused by chlorofluorocarbons, a chemical that was found in some products. Refrigerators used to contain them. So do we care enough about the Earth we have inherited and our passing onto future generations? Or is it now all too late to do anything? Each one of us can make a difference and we are all responsible for the environment. It takes care of us; we should take care of it too.