

# "WICKED WASTE"

## YOU WILL LEARN...

- \* How precipitation on a landfill can leach chemicals into the groundwater contaminating wells, ponds, and streams
- \* How to define an unsafe and a safe way to dispose of garbage

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Where does your trash go after you throw it in the can? Does it magically disappear? No! After trash leaves your house, it goes to a landfill. A landfill is a very large place where all the garbage is buried in the ground. After it is buried in the ground do you think the garbage decomposes? Some of it will, but most of it won't. It just sits there and never goes away. The milk carton you threw away at lunch will still be the same and be in the landfill when you are an adult and have a child in the third grade!

When it rains on the landfill, the water travels down through the soil and the garbage, and becomes polluted water called leachate. Leachate is very dangerous to people and animals. The leachate usually stays in the ground but sometimes comes out on the ground surface. It is very important to keep leachate away from people and animals.

Landfills are safe places for garbage when they are operated correctly. It is very expensive to operate a good landfill, so we need to reduce our garbage so they don't fill up as fast.

Dumps are also places where garbage goes, but dumps are very bad for the environment. They pollute the water, they breed germs and diseases, which can make people and animals sick, and they attract rats, which can carry diseases. Dumps are against the law and they are very bad. Water Wizards need to do their best to teach others not to dump illegally.

These are ways we can reduce the amount of garbage being buried in the landfill. We can reduce the amount of garbage we make by buying products which have less packaging or are made from all natural materials. We can reuse items instead of throwing them away. We can recycle items so that they can be processed into other goods we can buy again. When we do these things we will save landfill space and save precious natural resources and be good friends to the earth.

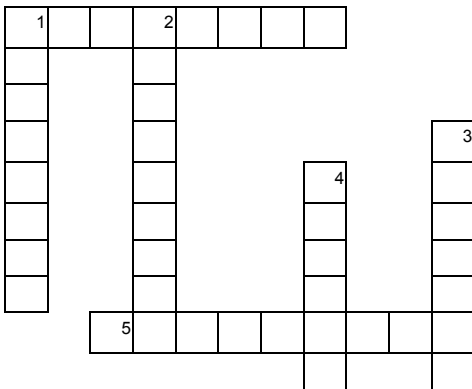
## DO THIS...

Your teacher will help your class build a model of a landfill, so you can see how the groundwater becomes contaminated. Give your teacher all of your Water Wizard attention.

## WATER WIZARD, CAN YOU TELL ME...

- \* Where trash goes after it leaves your house?
- \* What leachate is?
- \* What happens when it rains on a landfill?

## WATER WIZARD WORKOUT



Across

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ is where garbage is taken and buried in the ground.

5. We can reduce garbage by \_\_\_\_\_ aluminum cans and other products.

Down

1. \_\_\_\_\_ is a very polluted liquid which flows out of landfilled garbage.

2. Garbage takes many years to break down, or \_\_\_\_\_ after it is buried.

4. \_\_\_\_\_ are the biggest polluters.