

# Water

Jamaica, as a small mountainous island, is particularly vulnerable to the effects of water pollution. Polluted water adversely affects coastal and marine environments. Some sources of water pollution include:

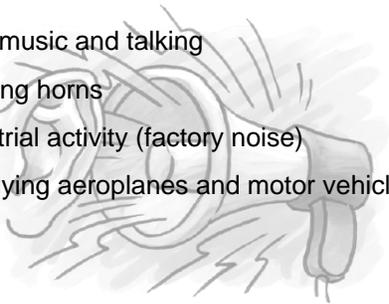
- Sewage effluent (treated and untreated)
- Surface run off from agricultural sources which may carry solid waste and dissolved chemicals such as pesticides
- Oil pollution from off shore oil spills, drilling, tanker washing and industrial effluent



# Noise

Frequent exposure to high levels of noise can cause headaches, high level of stress and temporary or permanent deafness. Sleep as well as concentration can be affected by noise. Some sources of noise pollution include:

- Loud music and talking
- Honking horns
- Industrial activity (factory noise)
- Low flying aeroplanes and motor vehicles



# What Can You Do?

- Dispose of and store chemicals properly
- Learn more about the proper disposal of waste
- Get involved in environmental action groups
- Reduce noise
- Report offensive odours and emissions from factories and commercial sites
- Do not burn your garbage
- Do not throw garbage into gullies, drains and rivers
- Reduce, reuse and recycle



*Managing & protecting Jamaica's  
land, wood & water*

### For further information contact

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## THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING AGENCY

# *Pollution Is Our Concern*



Air Pollution



Land pollution



Water pollution

### **What is Environmental Pollution ?**

Environmental pollution may be defined as; the contamination of the environment by man through substances or energy which may cause harm or discomfort to humans, other living organisms and ecological systems.

# What are Pollutants ?

Harmful materials and forms of energy are called pollutants. Pollutants are the by-products or waste produced from many human activities. Examples include:

- Gas and smoke from factories and cars
- Heated water (thermal waste) from cooling systems at electric power plants
- Pesticides and fertilizers from agricultural activities
- Dust from quarries
- Excessive noise from musical instruments, machinery, motor vehicles, etc.
- Untreated human waste (sewage)
- Garbage

## How Does Pollution Affect Humans and their surroundings?

Environmental pollution can have a damaging effect on human health. Pollutants affect human beings in different ways:

- Ingestion in water and food
- Inhalation through air
- Through physical contact with the human body

# Pollution

When there is contact, effects can be disastrous. The most severe toxic effect of a pollutant is lethal/death.

There may be damage to the brain and other parts of the nervous system, bones and other important organs of the human body. One example of this is the contact with lead through paint, crayons or discarded lead batteries. Inhalation of some pollutants can cause cancer, e.g. cigarette smoke or airborne asbestos.

## Types of Pollution

A useful way of classifying pollution is in terms of the media (**air, water or land**) that are affected by the pollutants.

### Land

Solid wastes generated during industrial processes are sometimes indiscriminately dumped on land. This can result in poisonous substances entering the soil. These poisons can seep through the soil and into the underground water systems, eventually reaching the rivers and streams and entering the food chain.



In addition, solid waste is constantly generated through discarding into ditches, gullies and backyards such things as:

- Old tyres or old car parts
- Old lead/motor car batteries
- Miscellaneous building materials
- Animal carcasses

These block waterways and can cause serious health hazards. Another source of pollution is the dumping of garbage on open sites.

### Air

Air pollution is the presence of contaminants or substances in the air that interfere with the health of living organisms, air pollutants include:

- **Chemicals, smoke and dust**
- **Radiation**
- **Vehicle exhaust**
- **Burning garbage**
- **Agricultural, industrial wastes and industrial smoke emissions**

Often these activities occur in heavily populated areas. Air pollution is linked to lung diseases, cancer, eye and sinus problems.

