

Water Pollution

According to the World Health Organization, any foreign matter either natural or other sources which contaminates and pollutes the water or the water supply making it harmful to human and aquatic life is termed water pollution. Household detergents and wastes pollute water bodies. When detergents and fertilizers containing phosphates are discharged into water, it promotes the growth of algae. Drilling oil under the sea may prove dangerous for marine life.

Water pollution may severely affect human, plant, and animal life. When contaminated water is consumed, the pathogens enter the human body. It may cause various water-borne diseases such as typhoid, cholera, diarrhoea, dysentery, and jaundice. Metals such as lead, mercury, and cadmium dissolved in water may cause several diseases if they enter the human body. When water contaminated with cadmium was consumed by the Japanese, they were affected by a disease called Itai-Itai.

Similarly, a disease known as Minamata affected the Japanese after they consumed fish that had a large concentration of mercury. When phosphorus and nitrates from fertilizers are disposed of in water bodies, they promote the growth of algae. The presence of algae in water bodies in a large number reduces the amount of dissolved oxygen in water resulting in the death of fish and other water organisms. Thermal pollution increases the temperature of the water which in turn reduces the level of oxygen in the water. This results in the death of many species of fish. Measures should be taken to prevent water pollution before the situation goes out of control. Anti-pollution scientific methods should be devised.

Reference:

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