Prompt: Water pollution has become a very costly environmental problem. Contact the pollution control authorities in your community for the levels of water pollutants. Identify main water pollutants and the possible causes of water pollution. How does your community compare to others? Discuss your findings.

Consider your own skills and interests. Think of at least two skills or interests that could be applied (if you had the time and resources) to helping improve water quality in your community.

Your answer should be between 700–900 words long and should include an introduction and conclusion section as well as references.

Introduction

We live in an envrionmentally fragile time and need to make all efforts to reduce our carbon footprint to save the planet. We can’t assume that we can keep doing what we’re doing because we know that pollution and garbage impact not just us but our children, animals, plants and everything. Water pollution especially we need to do better and we can reduce our levels of water pollution.

Local Pollution

In my community we live along a river system so it is especially important to reduce water pollution here. There’s often a lot of visible garbage in the water, but even more worryingly there’s a lot of chemicals in the water too. This makes it hard for animals to have clean drinking water and effects the plants and animals in the area. The environmental council has identified the following main water pollutants in my community:

* Nutrient pollution from fertilizers
* E-coli
* Plastics
* Solvents
* Petroleum

Because we have a lot of agriculture in our area, there is a lot of fertilizer use in the area. Farmers use this to help grow food and fertilizer helps it grow. Unfortunately this gets into the water, so the environmental council says we get a lot of nitrates and phosphates, also known as nutrient pollution. This causes lots of algae growth, which doesn’t sound bad in itself but too much algae stops sunlight from getting to other plants that fish and other animals need to eat. Because of the agriculture we have more nutrient pollution than other communities in our area.

What Skills Could be Used to Reduce Water Pollution?

If I had the resources, there are two things I’d want to do to improve water quality. First, I like to go for walks, and I think if we had more park paths and usable side walks we could get more people to go for a walk. Our community isn’t that big, so more side walks would also encourage people to walk more and drive less. If I had the resources I would build more sidewalks and teach people about the health benefits of going for walks. If they went for more walks and less driving, we could reduce pollution.

Second, I would love to plant more plants. Some plants can help reduce water pollution. Planting deep-rooted plants like ornamental grasses or wildflowers and such along the rivers can help reduce nutrient pollution because these plants absorb the nutrients so they don’t go into the water (Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, n.d.). I like gardening, so a planting initiative like these plants could help both my love of gardening and help reduce nutrient pollution in water.

Conclusion

My community has a lot of water pollution and this is a problem in my community. Reusing pollution can help increase water quality and give us more clean, drinkable water. This can help both plants and animals in my community too. By reducing driving and increasing the number of plants that can reduce nutrient pollution, I could possibly help reduce water pollution in my community.

Sources

*Sharpley, A. N., Sims, D., Lemunyon, J., Stevens, R., & Parry, R. Agricultural phosphorus and eutrophication second edition (Issue Brief: USDA.)*

Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. (n.d.) 15 ways to reduce nutrient pollution.