**Land pollution**

Land pollution is the deterioration (destruction) of the earth’s land surfaces, often directly or indirectly as a result of man’s activities and their misuse of land resources**.** It occurs when waste is not disposed of properly, or can occur when humans throw chemicals onto the soil in the form of pesticides, insecticides and fertilizers during agricultural practices. Exploitation of minerals (mining activities) has also contributed to the destruction of the earth’s surface

**Major Types of Land Pollution**

There are numerous reasons and [causes of land pollution](https://www.eartheclipse.com/pollution/causes-of-land-pollution.html), but the following 5 pose the most adverse effects to various life forms on earth.

**1. Agricultural Land Pollution**

We use a lot of fertilizers as well as pesticides, fungicides, and insecticides on our agricultural land in a bid to maximize yields. These agricultural inputs are all loaded with chemicals. The chemicals are effective in killing the pests and increasing production. But they also strip the soil of its minerals and other valuable compounds. Moreover, they are harmful to animals, fish, birds, and useful microbes. In fact, some of the herbicides we use to eradicate weeds are so harmful that they can be deadly even when used in small amounts.

**2. Non-biodegradable Solid Waste**

There is a lot of waste that is generated in our homes, schools, hospitals, shops, and even workplaces. Most of this waste is non-biodegradable. It can take up to millions of years to decompose completely. Non-biodegradable solid waste includes metal, glass, and plastic products. This waste finds its way to the dumping areas, which in turn results in [landfills](https://www.eartheclipse.com/environment/amazing-ways-to-help-protect-environment.html). Plastic products are especially the most notorious. They pile up over time and it becomes very difficult to eliminate them.

**3. Industrial Waste**

Another major source of land pollution is industrial wastes. These wastes include the following:

* Chemicals
* Plastics
* Metals
* Paints
* Other industrial manufacturing byproducts and residues.

[Industrial wastes](https://www.eartheclipse.com/pollution/terrible-effects-of-industrial-pollution.html) are normally generated from agricultural produce processors, oil refineries, pharmaceuticals, construction sites, and energy producing power plants. For example, power plants release chemical wastes and dispose them in landfills. These include coal, petroleum, and nuclear wastes. Construction sites, on the other hand, produce wood, metal, and plastic wastes, which make their way into landfills. While energy producing plants burn [fossil fuels](https://www.eartheclipse.com/geology/fossil-formation-types-facts.html) and [biomass](https://www.eartheclipse.com/energy/advantages-disadvantages-biomass-energy.html), other industrial producers like oil refineries and pharmaceuticals use various raw materials that generate loads of chemical residues and byproducts. And despite the fact that the disposal of industrial products is largely regulated, some of the waste still end up in the landfills.

**4. Deforestation**

[Land degradation](https://www.eartheclipse.com/environment/causes-and-effects-environmental-degradation.html) and pollution also occur when we cut down trees to clear land for agriculture, construction, mining or other economic activities. [Deforestation](https://www.eartheclipse.com/environment/devastating-effects-deforestation.html) leads to the total loss of the land’s value. Elimination of natural vegetation disrupts the ecosystem, adversely affecting various life forms. Take forest areas, for example; trees absorb 20 percent of the heat from the sun’s radiation. In so doing, it protects and conserves the surface soils from detrimental degradation. When you cut trees, you expose the earth’s surface to the sun’s intense heat and other harmful elements. This, in turn, leads to land pollution, [soil degradation](https://www.eartheclipse.com/environment/causes-and-effects-of-soil-erosion.html), and desertification

**5. Mining**

The extraction of materials and ores from under the Earth’s surface also contributes to land pollution. Mining degrades the quality of land. These include the extraction of metals, oil, coal, stones, stand, and mineral ores such as gold. When mining or quarrying, you normally have to clear the land surface and drill huge manholes and pits. After mining, we leave the land completely defaced and exposed to erosion, which further whittles down its quality and value.

# Effects of Land Pollution

1. **Soil pollution**: Another form of land pollution, where the upper layer of the soil is damaged, caused by the overuse of chemical fertilizers, soil erosion caused by running water and other pest control measures resulting in loss of fertile land for agriculture, forest cover, fodder patches for grazing.
2. **Climate pattern changes**: Land pollution effects are particularly hazardous and can lead to the loss of ecosystems. Directly or indirectly, land pollution affects climate patterns.
3. **Effect on human health**: Toxic chemicals and pesticides lead to potentially fatal illnesses like skin cancer and human respiratory system. These chemicals reach us through foods and vegetables grown in polluted soil.
4. **Danger to wildlife**: With the loss of habitat and natural environments, the animal kingdom faces a serious threat. Constant human activity on land is leaving it polluted, forcing these species to move further away and adapt to new regions or die trying to adjust.
5. **Environmental Impact**: Deforestation is compromising tree cover, leading to a highly imbalanced rain cycle. A disturbed rain cycle affects a lot of factors such as our green cover; trees and plants help balance the atmosphere, without them we are subjected to various concerns like global warming, the greenhouse effect, irregular rainfall and flash floods, among other imbalances. The land is literally the base of our ecosystem. We walk and survive on it, yet continue to abuse it.

**Ways to reduce land pollution**

Land pollution is a great concern for many parts of the world. The Earth's surface is contaminated by industrial waste, soil pollution caused by pesticides, and decomposable waste such as glass, cloth, plastic, paper, and metal. The control of land pollution is necessary in order to save the Earth from degradation.

There are many things each individual can do to prevent this from happening.

* You should avoid throwing things that can be reused. For example, you can use cardboard and plastic containers for other purposes. This is a great way to save some money.
* Recycle to help control land pollution. Items such as aluminum cans, paper, glass bottles, and objects made of plastic can be recycled and reused to make new products. When you purchase products, look for the recycling label on them.
* Poor waste disposal is one of the major causes of land pollution. Hence, proper waste disposal is one of the effective ways of curbing land pollution. This especially applies to the disposal of toxic waste products. It is imperative that industries follow the regulations guiding waste disposal.
* The United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) lists Agriculture as one of the major contributors to land pollution. And this occurs largely through pesticides. In light of that, farmers are advised to reduce the use of pesticides and embrace Integrated Pest Management (IPM). IPM involves using non-pesticide techniques such as crop rotation to eradicate pests. Namely, you should plant crops in alternate years. If you plant beans this year, for instance, then consider planting corn next year.In that way, pests specific to beans will not attack your corn. They will starve and eventually die. Without the use of pesticide, you will be able to reduce land pollution
* Follow instructions carefully when using pesticides and chemicals to prevent air, soil, or water pollution. When disposing of pesticides or chemicals, do not put them down household drains.
* Dispose of litter in the appropriate way. Use trash containers that have tightly fitted lids. Call your local disposal department for details about how to dispose of hazardous materials such as medical waste.
* Prevent livestock from coming in contact with drainage ditches, streams, and creeks. Collect and dispose of wastes for your livestock to prevent water supply contamination.