

Our Waterways



Lifesaving
education programs

Extension for my community

Waterways are fragile ecosystems that are often polluted by humans. How does our behaviour make our waterways healthy or unhealthy?

- 1 During your beach sweep before the start of the program, keep an eye out for safe rubbish to be used, like:
 - Soft plastic (chip bags, coffee cups etc.)
 - Paper
 - Aluminium (make sure no sharp edges)
 - Fishing wire (make sure no hooks)
 - Rinse and wash any bits of rubbish you pick up

Stay away from:

- Glass, metal, harmful rubbish (sharps, contaminated etc.)

- 2 To build a river
 - Build a mound of sand, with a trail for water to flow down in one direction
- 3 Or to build a lake
 - Pour water into your container
- 4 One by one, ask participants to add a small piece of rubbish to the waterway

- 5 As they add their rubbish, look out for how pollution is affecting the water. Does it:
 - Change the way water looks?
 - Change the way water moves?
 - Sink to the bottom, or float to the top?
 - What animals might this rubbish be harmful for?
 - How might this be harmful for humans to play in or drink from?
- 6 Talk about how human activity like boating, farming, and dredging can stir up sediment. Add a handful of sand or dirt to the waterway to simulate stirred up sediment.
- 7 Once all bits of rubbish are in your waterway ask participants if they have a polluted waterway near them.
- 8 How could we clean our waterways? With each suggestion on cleaning our waterway, remove a piece of rubbish.
- 9 Once all pollution is removed from our waterway, have another look at the water. Does the water look the same as when we started the activity? Why not?
- 10 Discuss the long term affects of pollution on our waterways, and how this impacts our community's wellbeing.

Equipment:

- ☐ Small bits of safe rubbish
- ☐ Making a river:
 - Beach shovels
 - Bucket of water to pour down the river
- ☐ Making a lake:
 - Large bucket, eskie or large Tupperware box

