









Cleaning Our Waters

Students will learn about ocean spills and how to clean them.

3rd - 5th
Grade

Materials

-  2 Tin Pans
-  Water
-  Vegetable Oil
-  Dish Soap
-  Medicine
-  Dropper
-  Spoon
-  Paper Towels
-  Cotton Balls

What is an Oil Spill?

An oil spill is a form of pollution generally found in the ocean. However, oil spills can happen on land too. An oil spill occurs when oil leaks or spills into the water. Oil spills can also happen in rivers or lakes! They are very harmful to the environment and the animals who live in these areas.

How to Cleanup an Oil Spill

The chemistry behind soap is the key. Each end of the soap is made of different molecules. One end hates water (hydrophobic) and the other loves water (hydrophilic).

Directions

1. Fill the tin pan full of water.
2. Pour oil into the water.
3. Try different ways to clean up the oil. Can you use the cotton balls? The paper towels? How about the spoon or medicine dropper to scoop out the oil?
4. Try to use the dish soap.
5. Repeat this experiment and see if any other household items can separate the oil from the water.

