

WASTEWATER

Activity 10

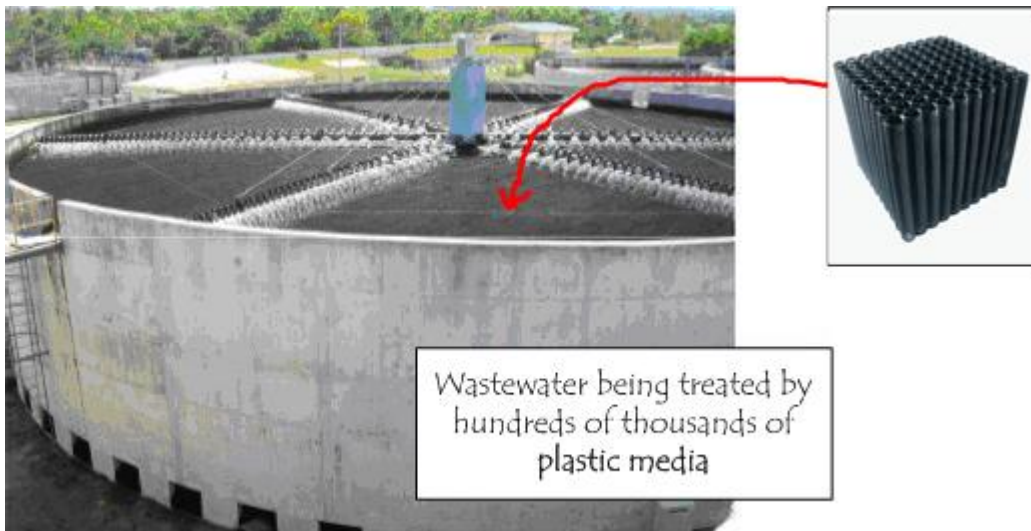
From green to clean...

For many years, wastewater has been cleaned by trickling it over layers of rocks. The rocks are covered in a green or brown slime called **biofilm** that “eat” the contaminated parts of wastewater. The cleaned wastewater can then soak safely back into the ground.

Even Mother Nature uses this technique! If you go to a river and pick up a rock from the water it will feel slippery and slimy – this is a natural **biofilm**. The more **biofilm** a rock has, the more polluted the river is.



Nowadays, the rocks are replaced with small plastic shapes called **plastic media**. This is what the Banks Street Wastewater Treatment Plant uses.



Find a rock at a nearby river and study the **biofilm** on it.

1. How polluted do you think the river is?
2. What do you think is polluting the river?