



# What One Person Can Do to Help the Chesapeake Bay



**W**ith the many problems and challenges facing the Chesapeake Bay today, it is easy to wonder if there is anything that one person can do to help. In reality, there are many ways that individuals can lessen their impact on our Bay.

One thing each person can do to improve the health of the estuary is conserve water. When people wash dishes, brush their teeth, or flush a toilet, the water they use is transported to a treatment plant in their community and ultimately reenters the watershed. When we reduce the amount of water that we use, we reduce the amount of treated water that reenters the Bay.

Another thing that each person can do to lessen their impact on the Bay is conserve electricity. When light switches are left on all night, power plants need to

work overtime to supply power. These plants create chemical pollutants that enter the atmosphere from smoke stacks and fall back to the ground with rainfall. The less power electrical plants need to provide, the less pollution they create.



*Planting trees at home, at school, or near a local stream is one way to help the Bay. The roots from trees help to prevent erosion by holding the soil in place, while the leaves reduce erosion by lessening the impact of heavy rains.*

There are many other ways that individuals can help the Bay. Carpooling, for example, cuts down on the amount of automobile exhaust entering the atmosphere,

which lessens the amount of chemical nutrients entering the estuary. Recycling paper, aluminum, and other materials conserves resources and helps slow the rate of deforestation and clearing of land for mining. Getting involved in community projects to clean trash from roadsides, restore habitat on a local stream, or plant Bay grasses in shallow parts of the Chesapeake help improve habitat for plants and animals. Educating your friends and family about how they impact the Bay encourages them to get involved with improving the health of this environment.

Ultimately the health of the estuary depends on the activities of the individuals who live within its watershed. By making simple lifestyle changes that lessen your impact on the Chesapeake Bay, **YOU** can take an active role in restoring the health of this amazing ecosystem!



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NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the text on the previous page, then answer the following questions in complete sentences. Write your answers on the lines.

1. What happens to the water that goes down the drain after you brush your teeth or take a shower?

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2. In the spaces below, describe how the following actions help to lessen your impact on the Bay and improve the health of the Chesapeake:

A. Conserving electricity

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B. Carpooling

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C. Recycling

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D. Getting involved in community restoration projects

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