

Southern Water

## WaterWise Teaching Resource



Down the drain

Group profile

**Environmental Pressure Group**

© Southern Water 2002.

These materials are freely photocopyable in educational institutions.



### The Interest Groups

- Water company
- Local council
- Local residents
- Tourist board
- Environmental pressure group
- DEFRA

**You represent the Environmental Pressure Group**

### The new works

There are plans to build a new multimillion-pound wastewater treatment works and sludge recycling centre on a brownfield site outside Richardford. The new works will treat wastewater from Richardford and all the surrounding towns including Pountney, Filmore, Gull Sands, Saltmouth, Hartmouth and Darton. Treated wastewater will be pumped to Darton and discharged into the sea there, through the long sea outfall. Outfalls at Gull Sands and Saltdown will be converted to storm overflows. The treatment works at Darton, Filmore and Hartmouth will be converted to pumping stations.

### The Environmental Pressure Group's Position

*'We want cleaner seas and a clean, safe environment for everyone. We need to protect the sea, the air and the land for future generations and ourselves. We will be looking at any possible effects of pollution from the new works on the immediate and local area.'* **Susan Brookes, local environmental pressure group**

### Your responsibilities

- You put pressure on powerful and 'authority' groups, such as the Council, local businesses and the government.
- You ask these groups to think about the bad things that are happening to the environment.
- You try to defend people's rights - to have clean air, safe beaches, clean seas, and a nice world to live in. You think about the needs of local residents and visitors.
- You care about local wildlife and defend their rights as well.

### What do you have to do?

1. You have to carry out some research to find out about Environmental Pressure groups such as 'Surfers against Sewage', the 'Badger Watch Society', conservation groups or Sludgewatch campaigners.
2. You have to prepare some information, such as newspaper items, leaflets or posters, on behalf of one or two pressure groups and their views towards the new building.
3. You have to prepare for an open meeting. At the meeting you will tell the others about the Environmental Pressure Group's view of the new wastewater works and sludge recycling centre at Richardford. You may have reasons for and against building the works at Richardford.
4. You have to prepare to answer questions about the Environmental Pressure Group's reasons in an open debate.



## There are lots of resources to help you:

- This Profile Sheet
- The Fact Sheets will give you some background information and some facts and figures. This will help you understand how many people use the Water Services and what they use them for.
- The Subjective Literature is a collection of newspaper reports and ideas for promotional leaflets and posters. You can use these as they are. You can also write some of your own.
- Clip Art is available to help you illustrate your presentations.
- Web Links

## Getting started

Make sure everyone in the group has a job to do:

- Preparing speeches
- Writing newspaper items
- Designing posters
- Designing leaflets
- Finding out information.

Think carefully about what you want to say in your speech, newspaper or leaflet. You must be able to back up what you say with reasons or facts. You must be consistent - make sure your group members do not contradict each other.

## Getting your ideas together

For the open meeting you will need a spokesperson or a small group of people to make a speech or present your case. They can use some of the information you have prepared.

**You need to stress the disadvantages of having a new wastewater works at Richardford. You decide which ones to stress.**

During the second part of the debate any member of any group can ask questions. On behalf of the Environmental Pressure Groups, you must be ready to answer any concerns raised.

**You must be aware of advantages others might stress.**

Here are some ideas for getting started. Look at the list of points in the table.

What can you add to the list?



**There are plans for a new wastewater treatment works and sludge recycling centre just outside Richardford. What are the.....**

group profile

Advantages?	Problems?
Some environmental scientists may have advised the Company.	The new works will be built on a brownfield site near the industrial estate, on land that is at the moment open countryside. New pipe works will criss-cross the area causing disruption to the landscape and the new works will be an unattractive eyesore for local residents. They are taking away the beauty of the countryside - our heritage.
We are pleased that the Water Company has carried out an environmental assessment of the project, but what are they going to do about any problems that have been found?	Increased traffic to and from the construction site will cause more pollution from car and lorry emissions. It is harmful to people's health. Foul air from the new works will pollute the atmosphere, if not controlled.
A new wastewater works should mean we get cleaner seas and cleaner beaches.	Wastewater is pumped into the sea through a pipeline. This contains a certain amount of sewage.  'Surfers against Sewage' believe that there is a serious health risk to swimmers and surfers from sewage contaminated bathing waters. They believe that sewage contaminated water can cause infections to Ear, Nose, Throat, Eye, Skin, Chest (Respiratory) and Wounds. It can also cause stomach problems.  Sewage on beaches and in bathing waters is the second greatest environmental concern of the public in England and Wales. We want an environment that is safe and enjoyable for present and future generations.
The sludge is being recycled in accordance with the "Safe Sludge Matrix" agreed with the British Retail Consortium representing supermarkets and other food retailers.  You can download the "Safe Sludge Matrix" at <a href="http://www.adas.co.uk/matrix/safe_sludge.htm">http://www.adas.co.uk/matrix/safe_sludge.htm</a>	To get rid of the 'sludge mountain', produced by the treatment works, the Water Company will recycle the sludge and sell it to farmers as fertiliser.  Industrial waste and human waste will be spread on the land instead of being dumped in the sea. Do we want our children eating food grown on sewage?  Is this product safe to be spread on agricultural and animal grazing land? What effects will there be on the food chain? What will be the effect on us when we eat local plants and animal produce? And what about the smell?
	Save the badger: There are two badger setts on the site. When the treatment works is built the badgers will have to go! Their homes will be destroyed. What's going to happen to them? Who will save them? It's like David and Goliath - the poor badger. We must help the Badger Watch Society protect them and save their homes.
	Our coastline is a valuable resource. The water industry is continuing to use our coastline as a sewer and toxic dump.