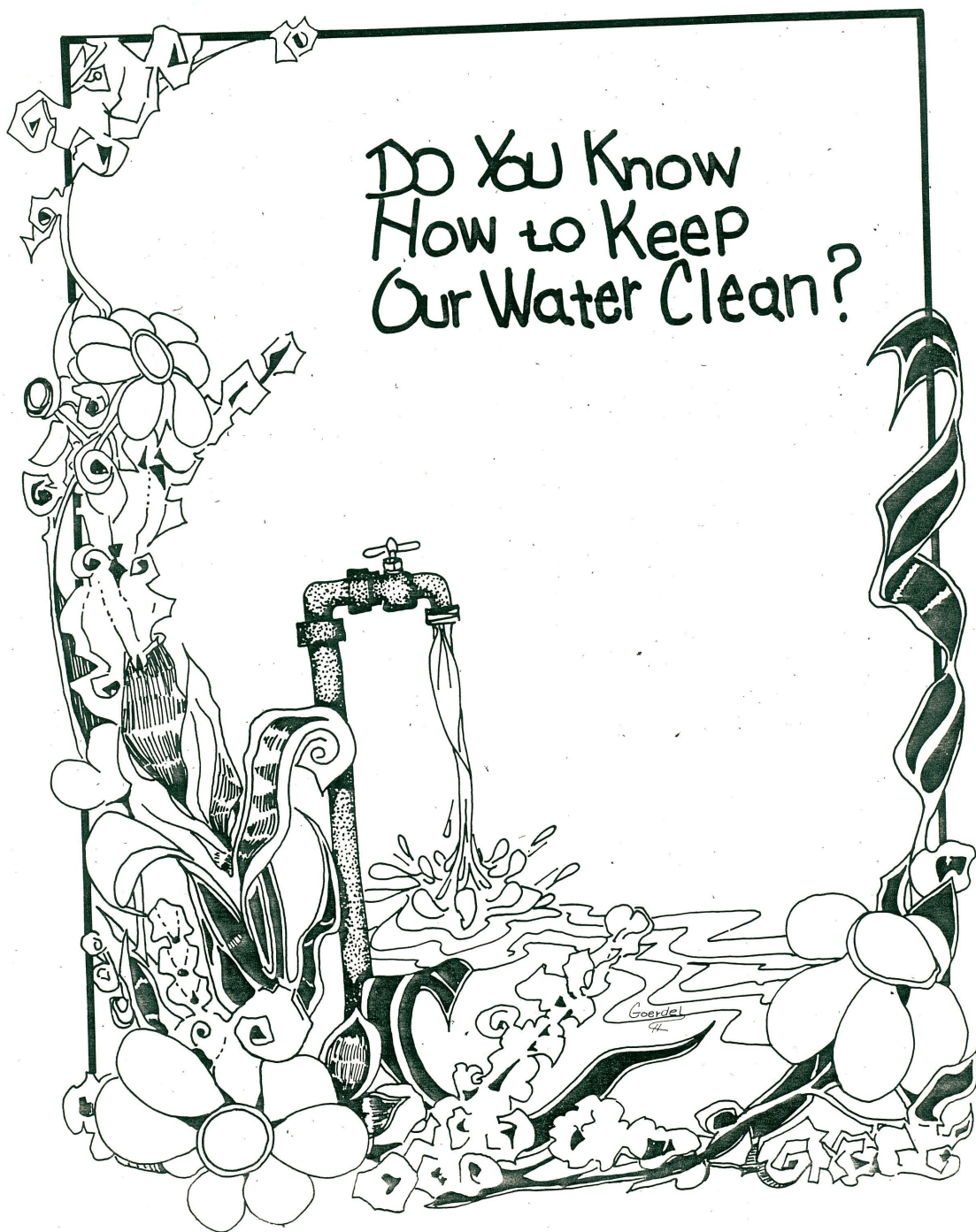
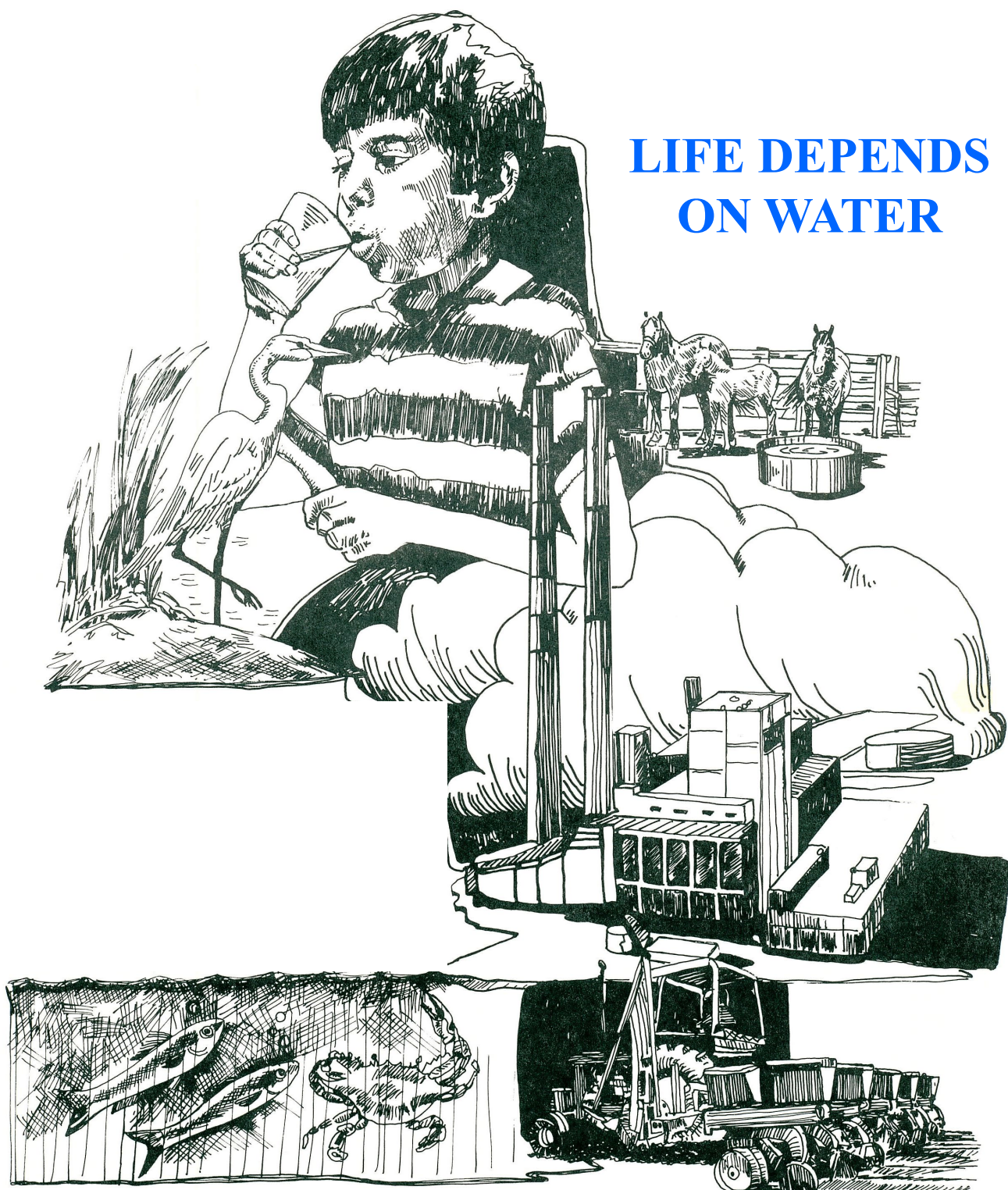


Do You Know  
How to Keep  
Our Water Clean?



Presentation developed from TNRCC document GI-27  
For UCISD Elementary Schools  
By Nueces River Authority

# LIFE DEPENDS ON WATER



## Teacher Read Introduction

People, animals and plants are mostly made of water. Each person needs to drink over a half gallon of water each day to live. Big animals like horses need about 15 gallons of water a day.

Water is also used for cleaning, watering lawns, cooling buildings, growing food and having fun. Water is used in factories to help make things like paper, steel and gasoline. And water is the home of many animals and plants such as fish, whales and seaweed. There would be no life without water. That is why it is so important to keep water clean.



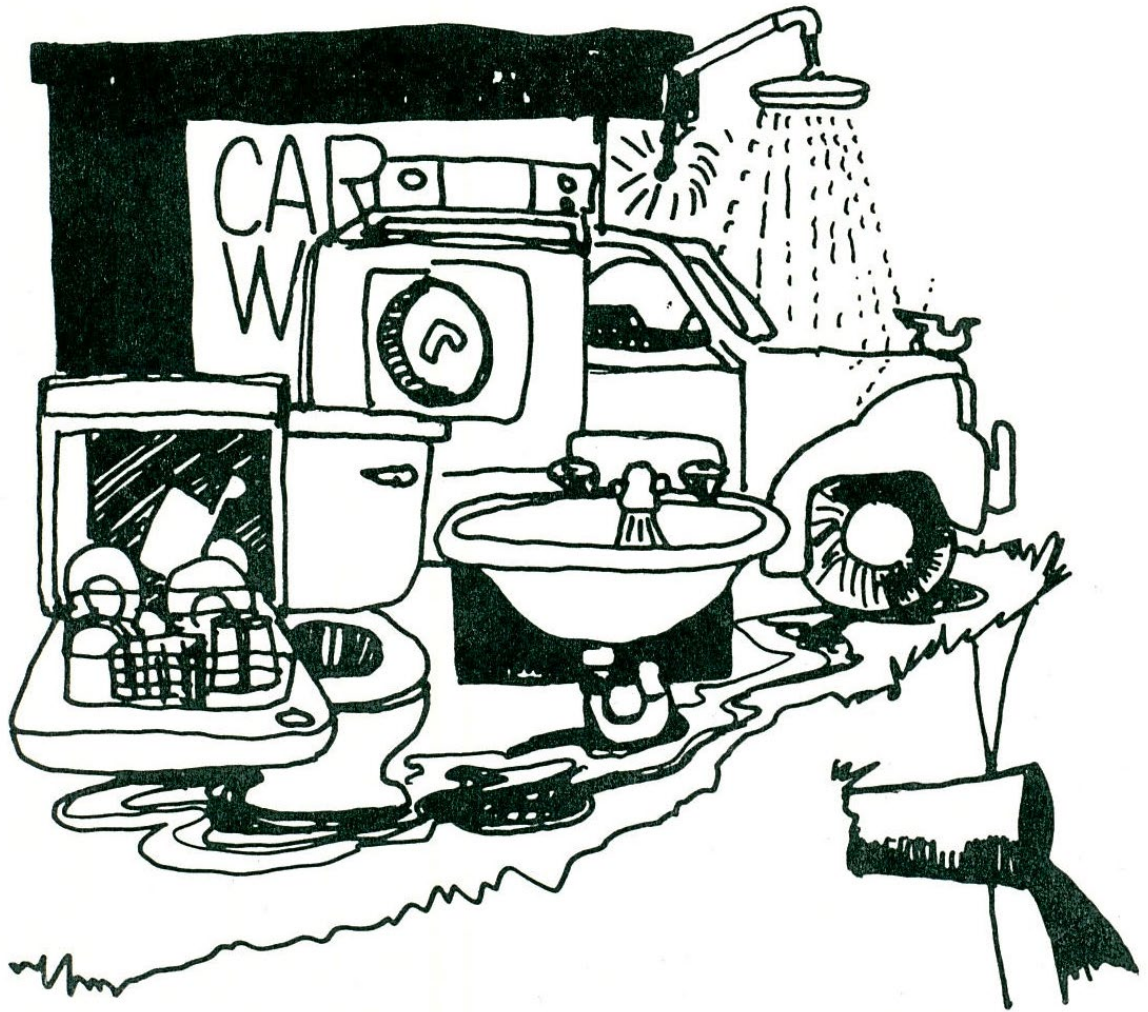


Once upon a time, there was plenty of room on Earth for all the plants, animals and people. There was plenty of clean, fresh water, too.





As the years went by, there were more and more people.

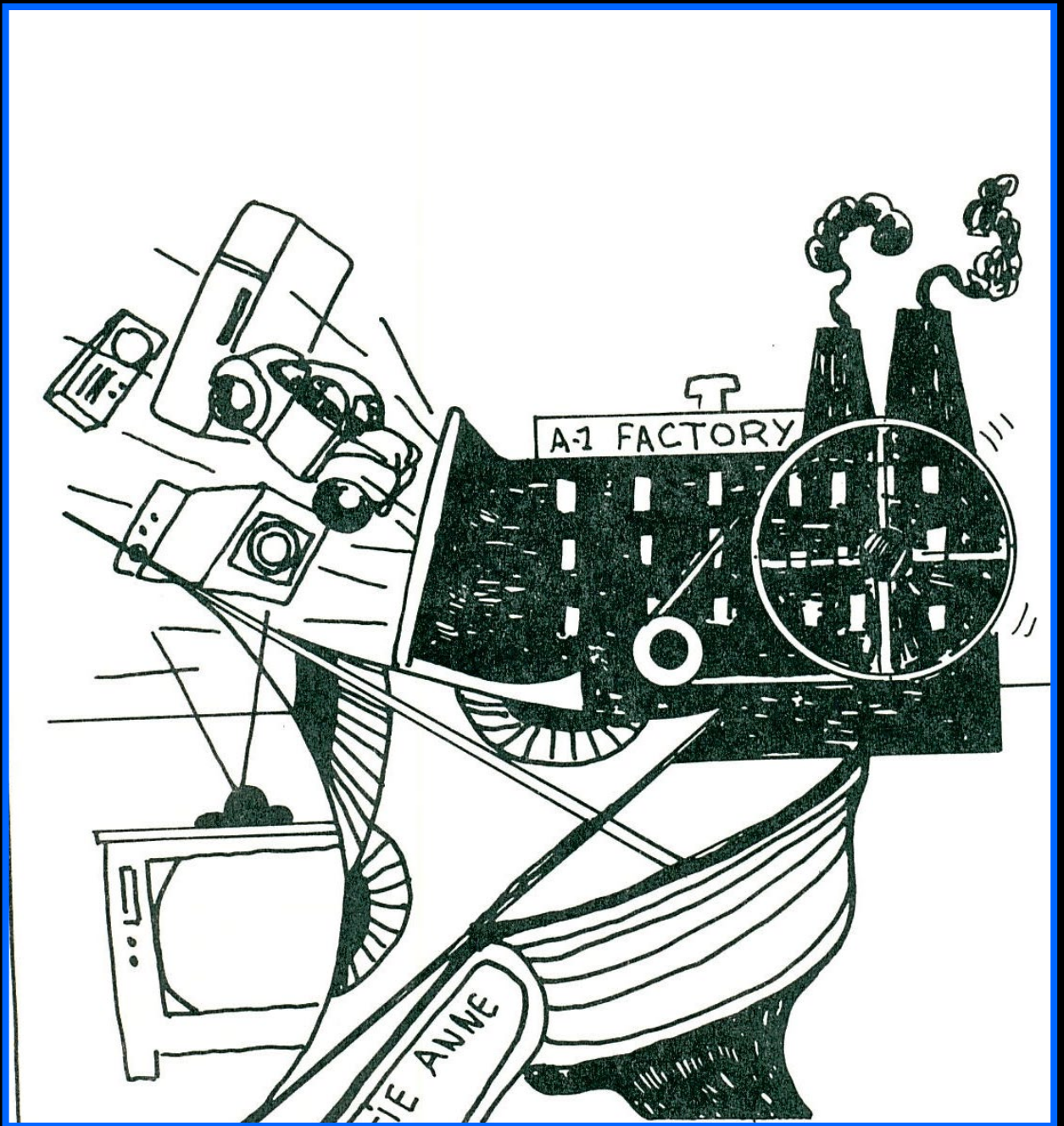


More people used more kitchens and  
bathrooms and washed more cars.  
More people used more water.

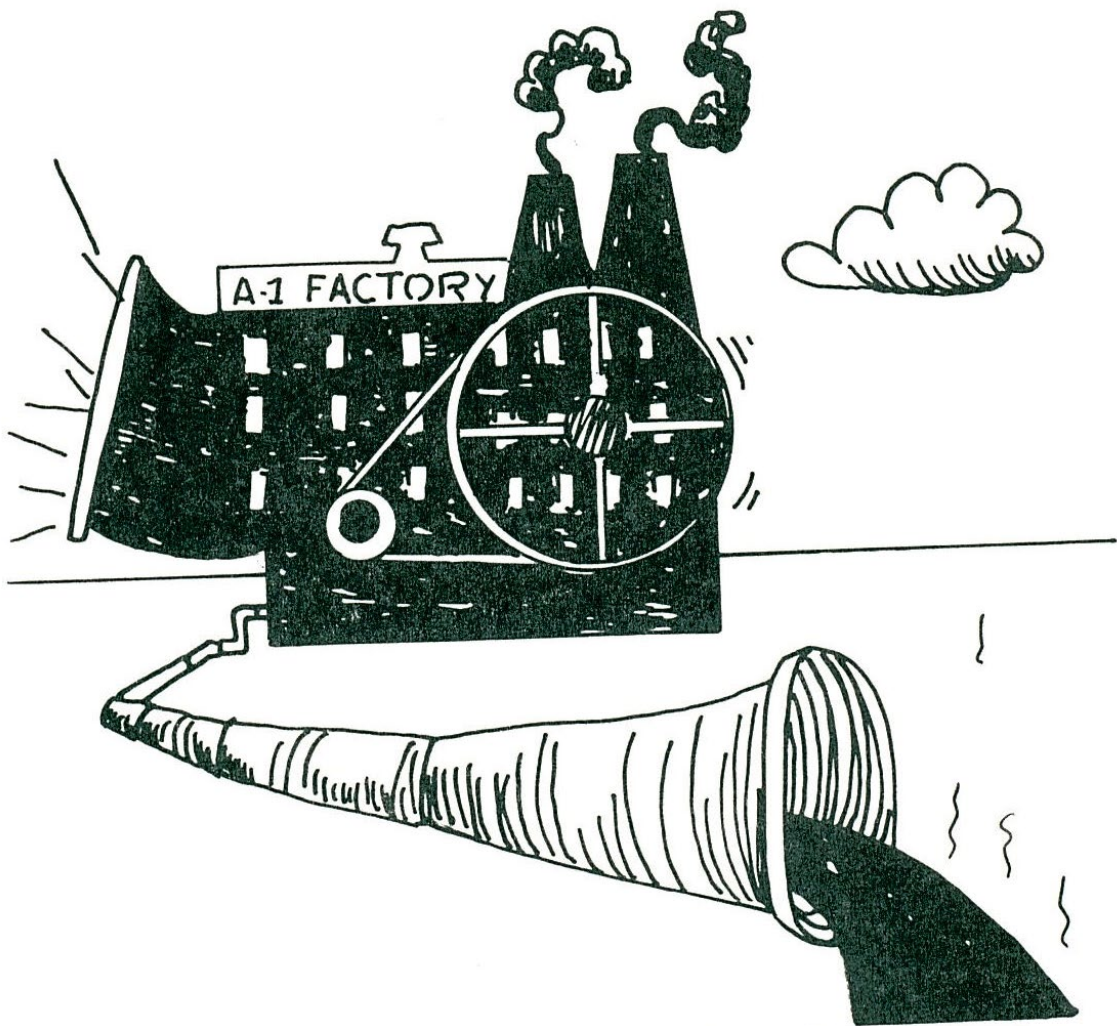


Often the towns and cities did not clean the dirty water very well before pouring it into creeks and rivers.





More people needed more things. More factories were built so that more and more things could be made.

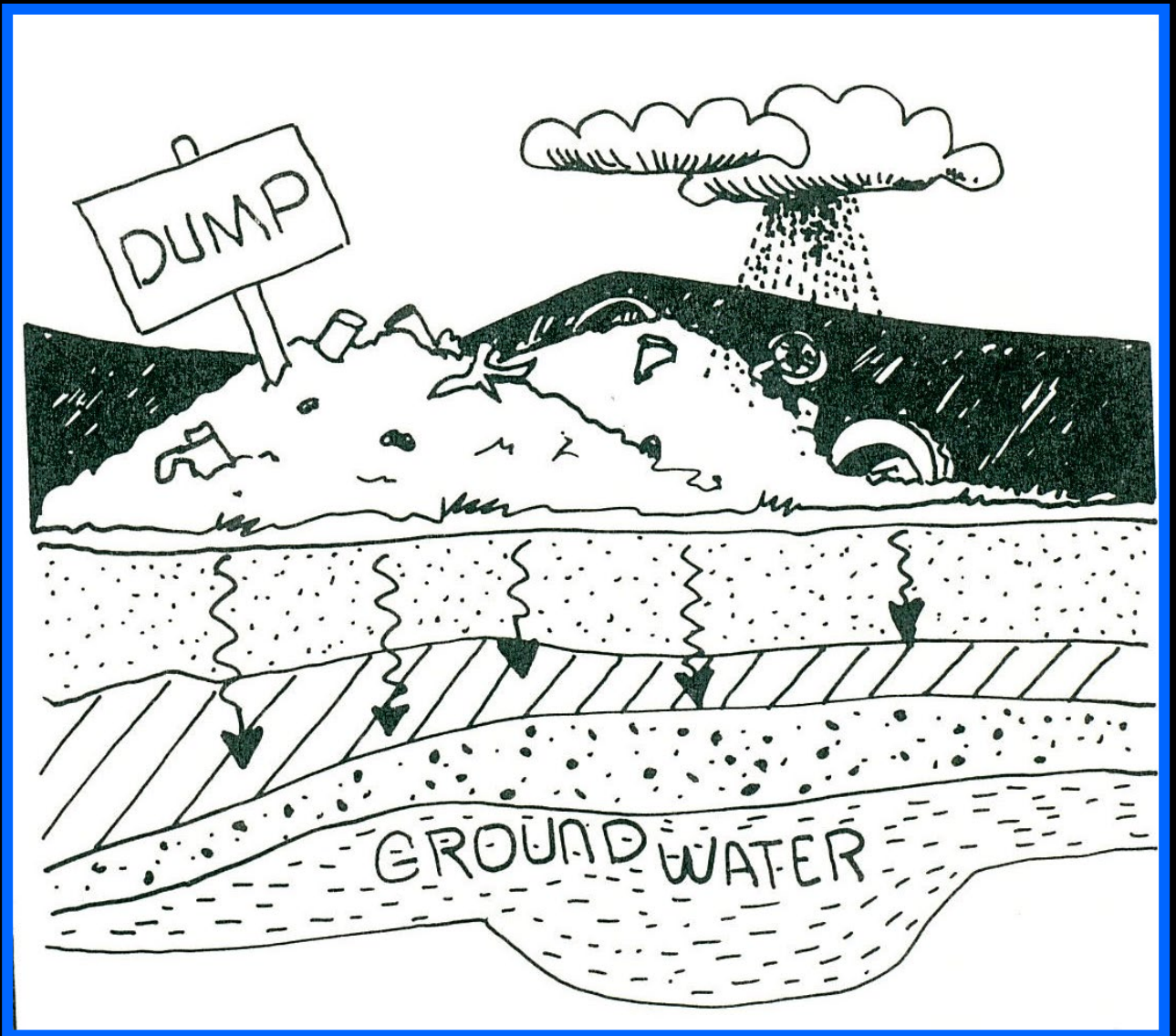


Factories use a lot of water. Many factories pour used dirty water back into the creeks and rivers.



More people and factories made more garbage to take away and dump.





Rain soaked through the garbage and got dirty. Then it soaked down under the ground and made the under ground water dirty.



Because of all the bathrooms, factories, and garbage, water everywhere got dirtier and dirtier.



The animals that live in the creeks and rivers began to get sick and die.





People could no longer swim and play in the rivers.



Even well water from under the ground got dirty and could no longer be used by people.



People had been thoughtless about using water! They could not go back. But they could not go on being thoughtless either.

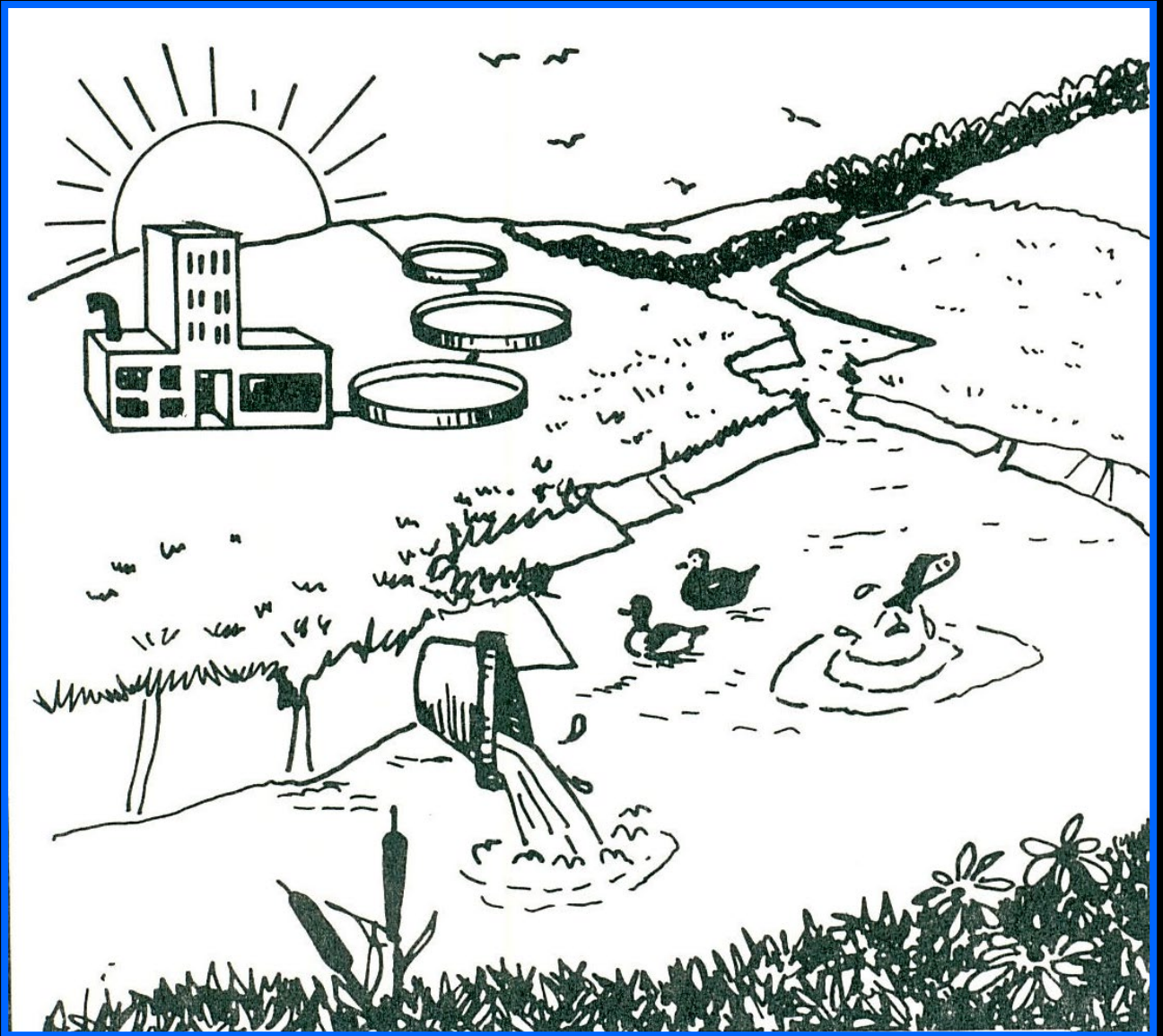




Many towns and cities now clean their used water. When water is used and dirty it is called **waste water**.



Every time you flush the toilet or run the water down a drain the wastewater is sent through pipes under the ground to a place called a **wastewater treatment plant**.

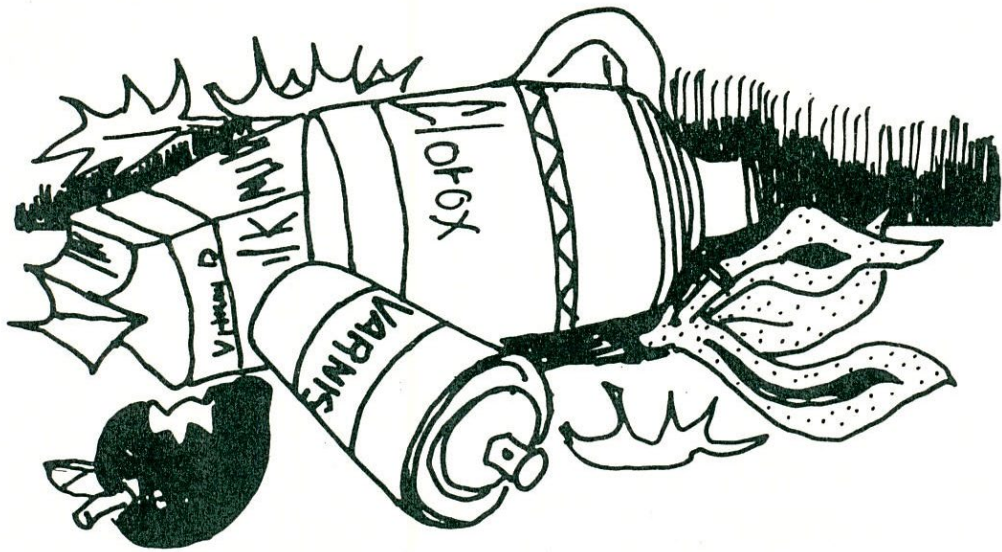


The treated water can be poured into a creek or river. The treated water mixes with the fresh water and can be used again by people, plants and animals.





More and more factories are cleaning their wastewater, too. Some factories have poisons and other bad things in their wastewater and they must be extra sure none of it gets into creeks and rivers.

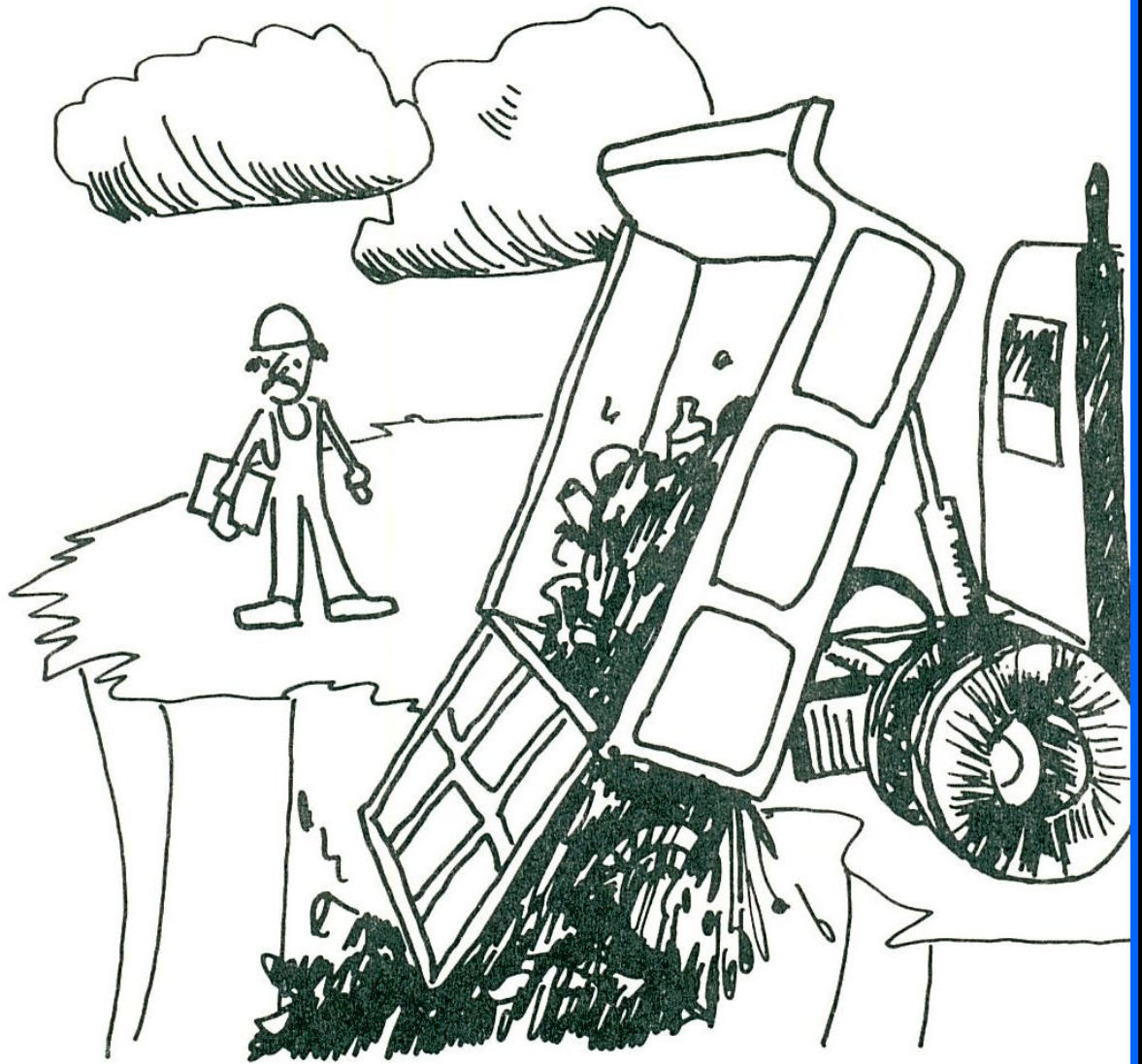


Just as used water is called wastewater, used paper plates, banana peels, paint cans and milk cartons are called **solid waste**.

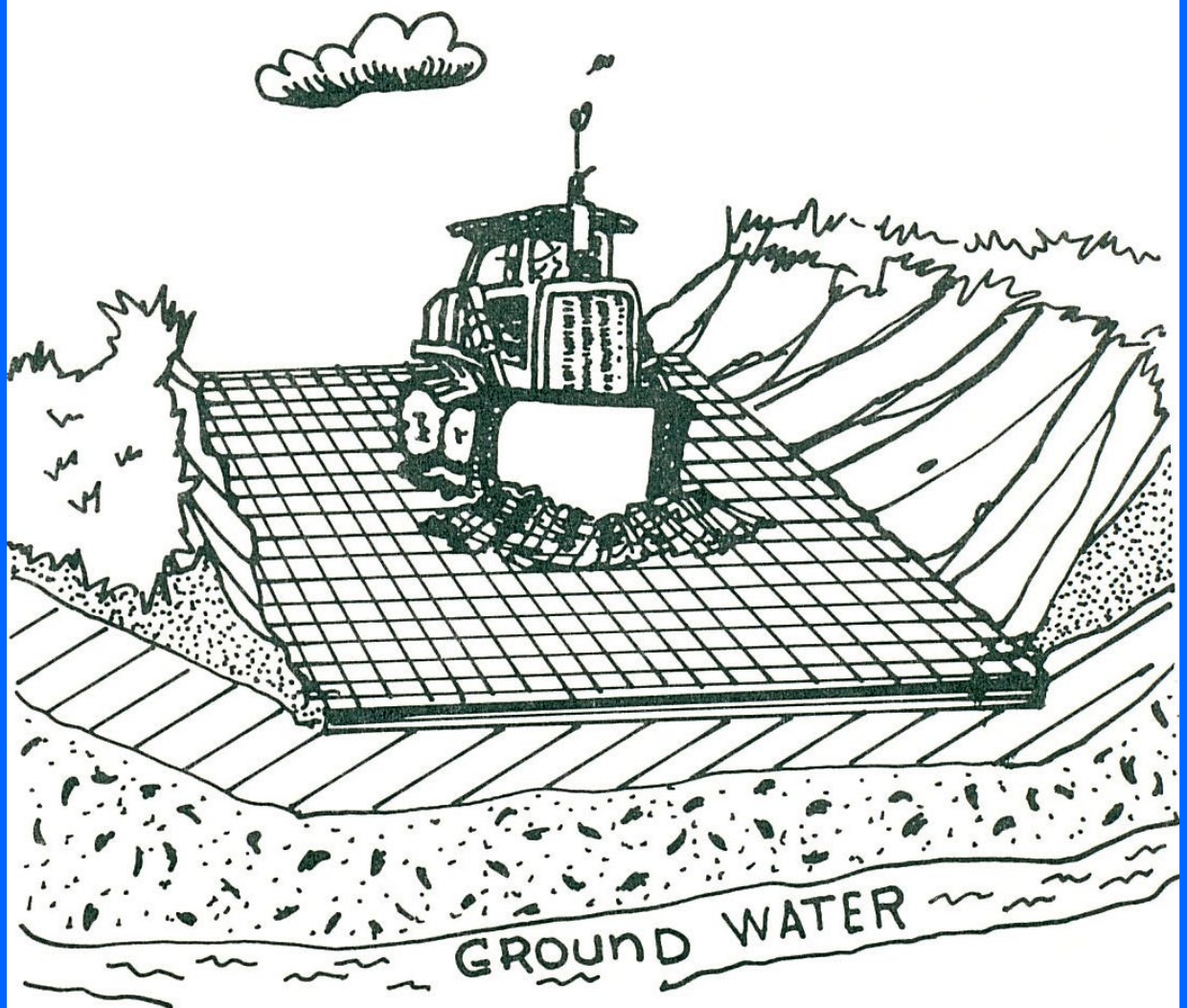


More and more towns, cities and factories are not dumping their solid waste just anywhere.





Now solid waste is often buried in the ground in landfills.



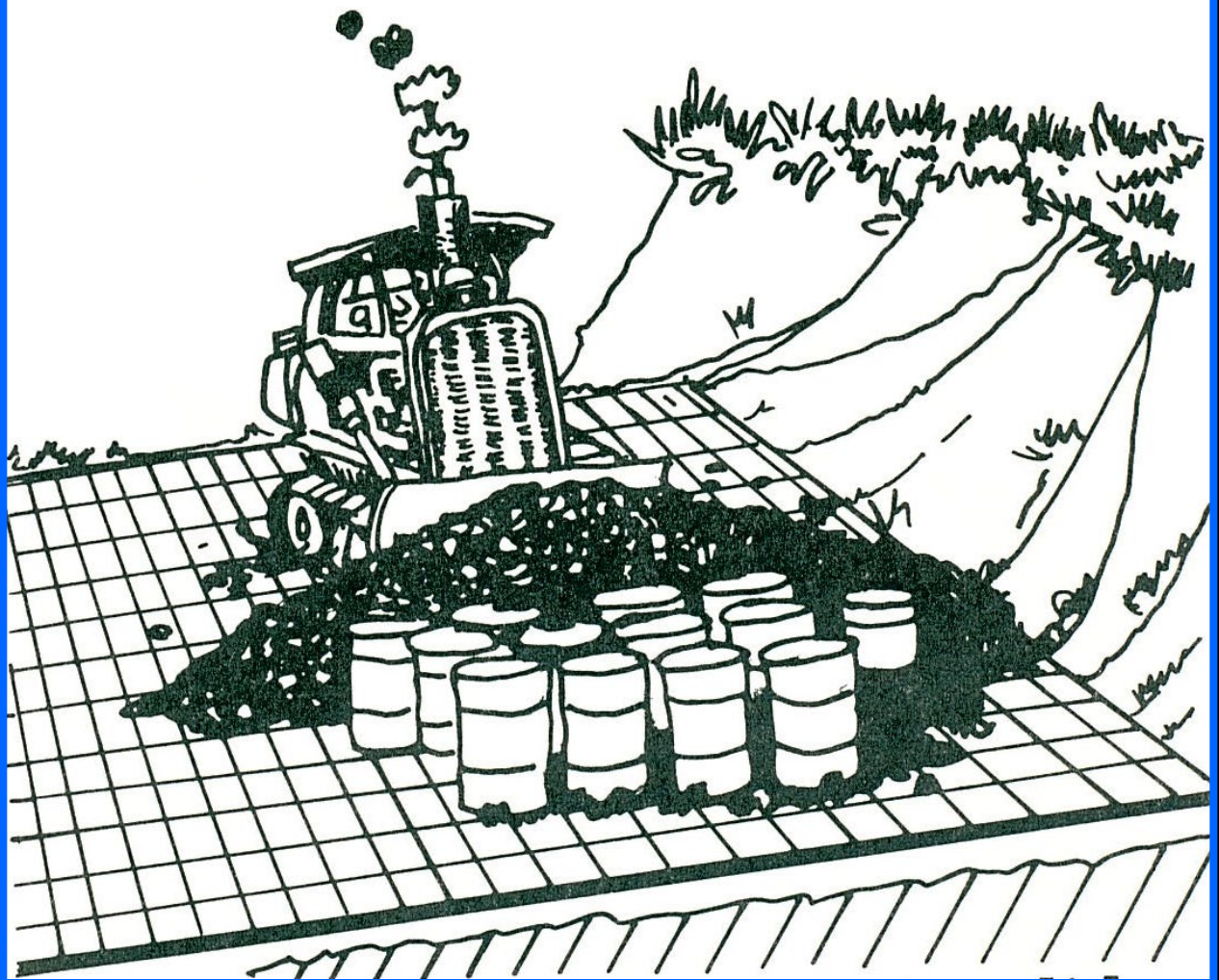
Clay or plastic is put under the solid waste in landfills to keep rain water from soaking through. This keeps the groundwater from getting dirty.



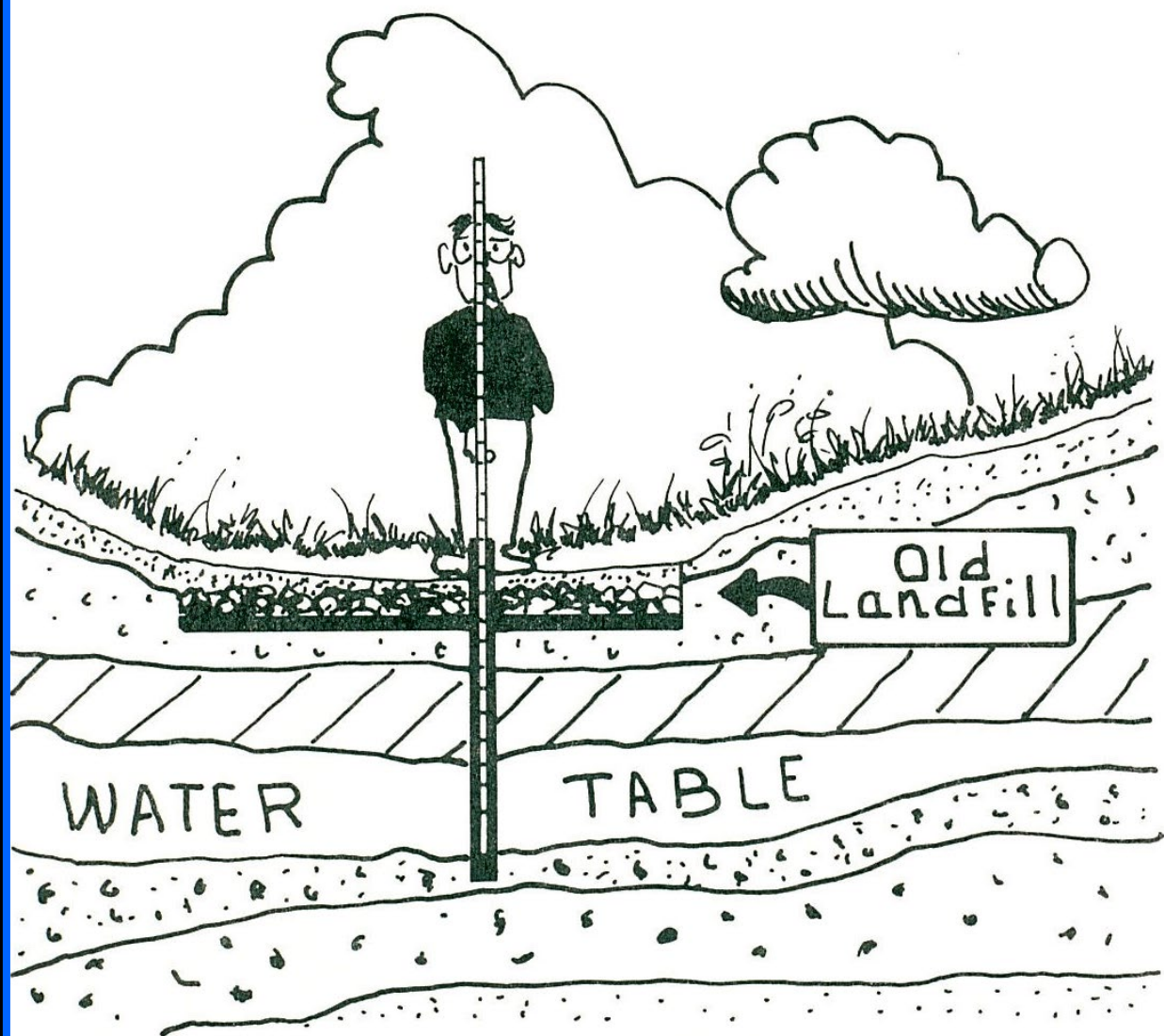


Just like wastewater, solid waste from many factories can be worse than solid waste from people's trash cans.

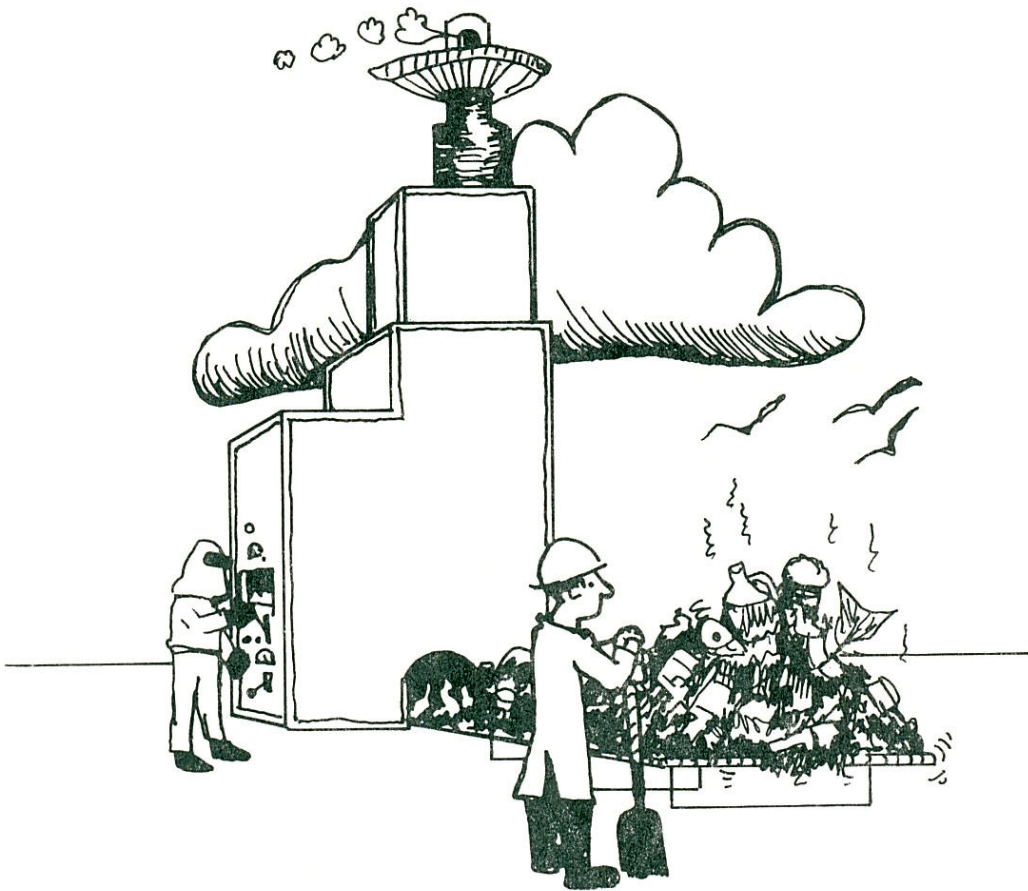




When factories put their solid waste in the ground, there is more clay and plastic under it.

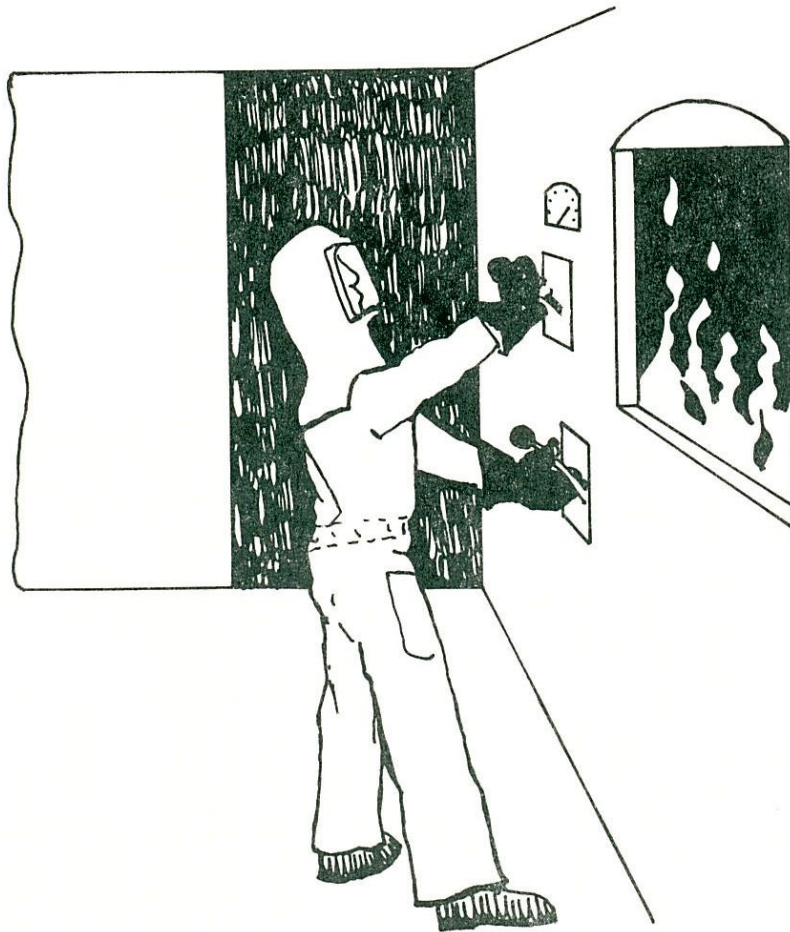


Tests are made all the time to make sure no rainwater is getting through to hurt the groundwater.

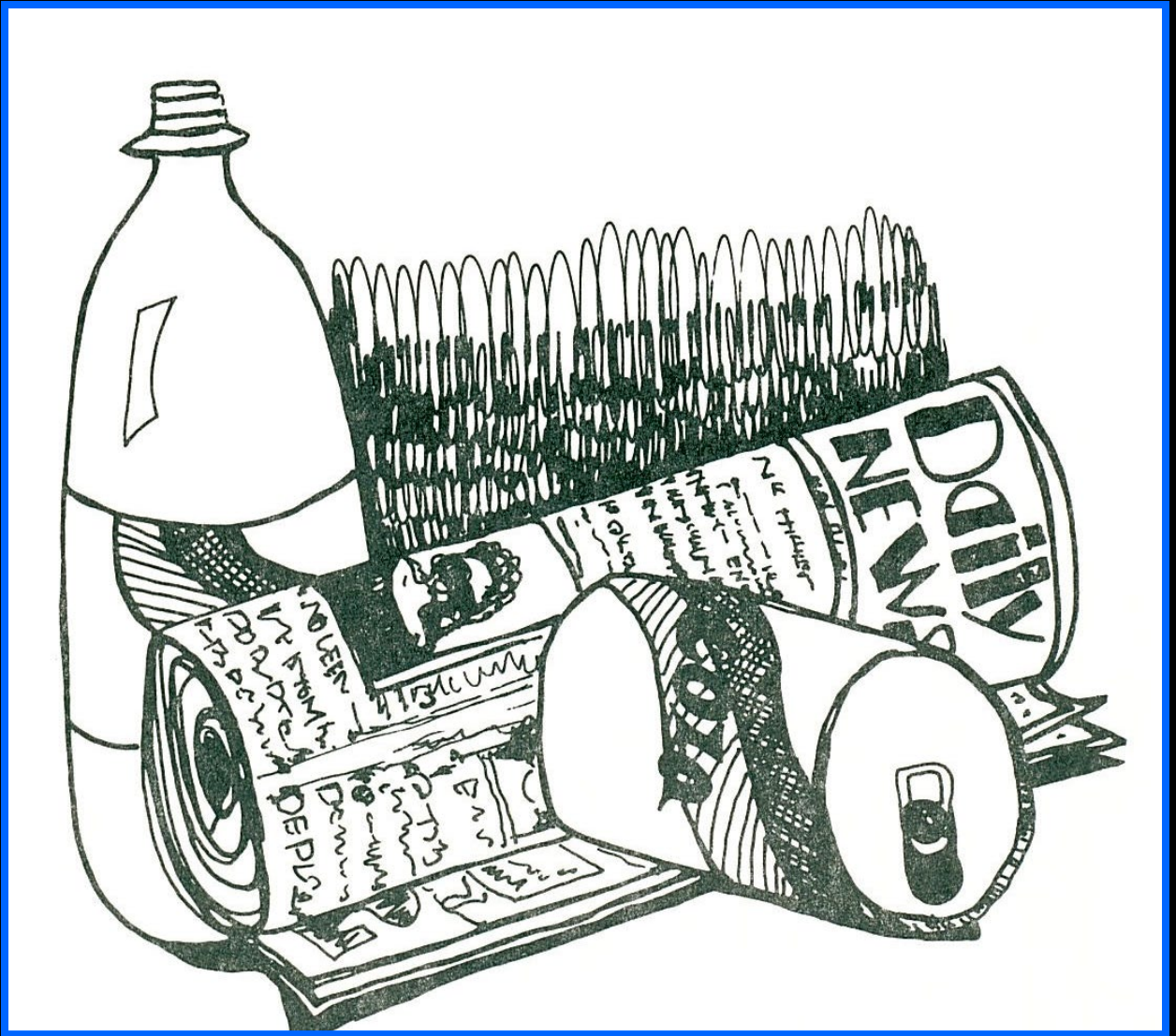


Sometimes instead of burying the solid waste in the ground it is burned in big, special ovens called incinerators.

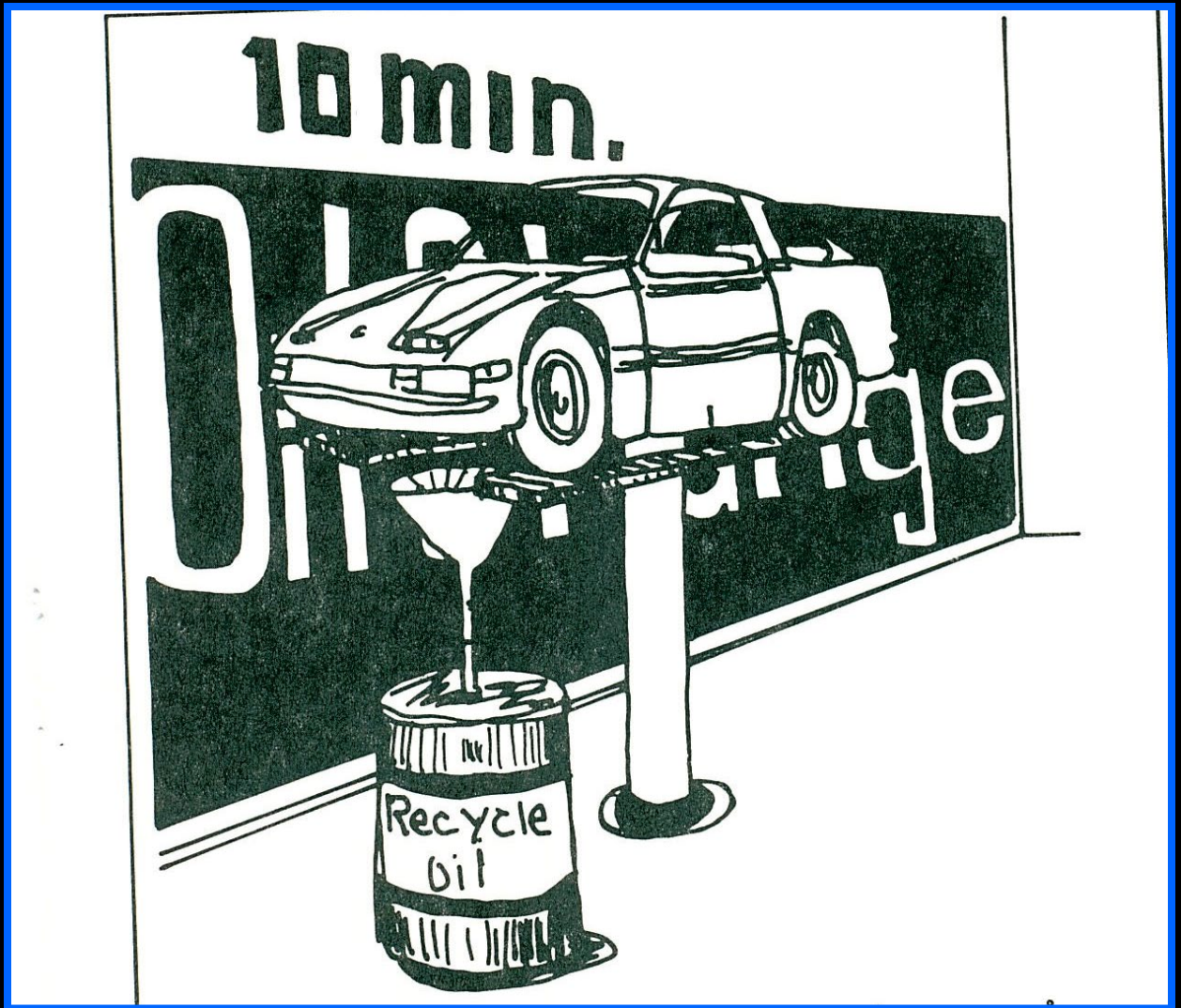




Incinerators must be extra hot to burn the solid waste all the way. This keeps poisons and other bad things out of the smoke.



More and more people now take things out of their solid waste which can be used again, like newspaper, glass bottles and cans. This is called **recycling**.

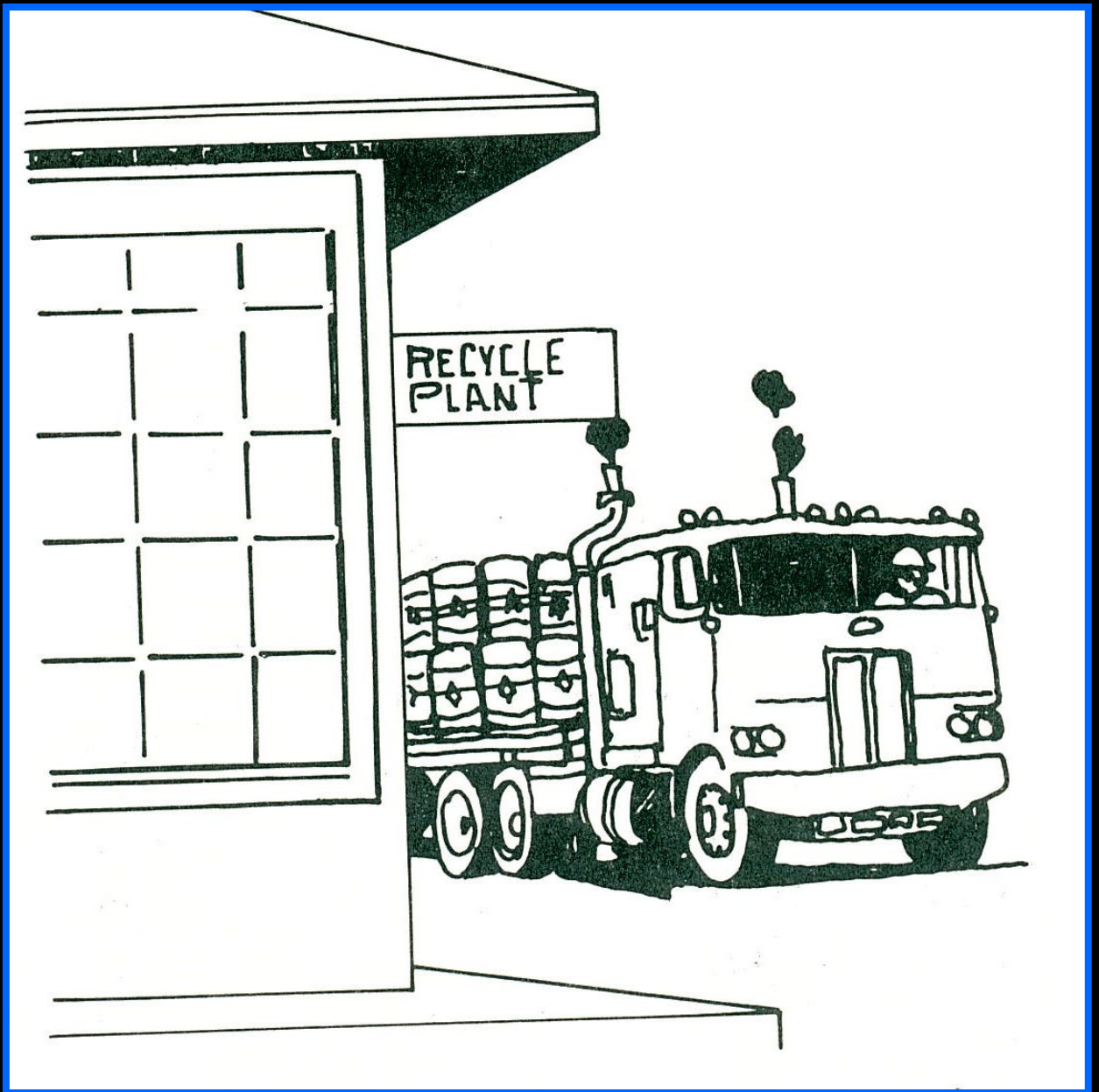


People are also removing poisons and other bad things from their solid waste like paint cans, bug sprays and car oil.

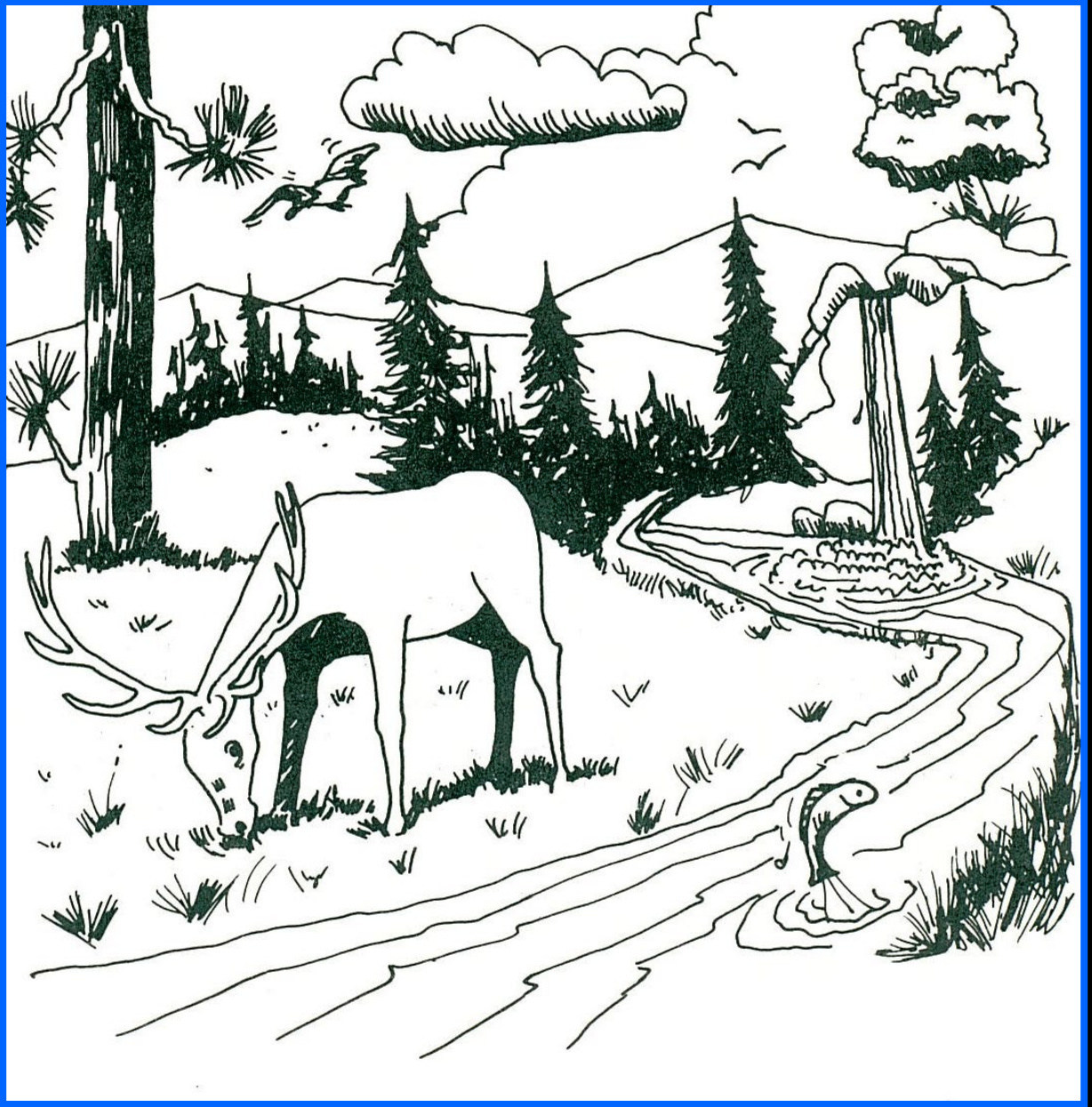




They are taking them to special places in town where everyone's waste can be collected and taken care of together.



Some is recycled. The rest is taken to the special landfills or incinerators used by factories.

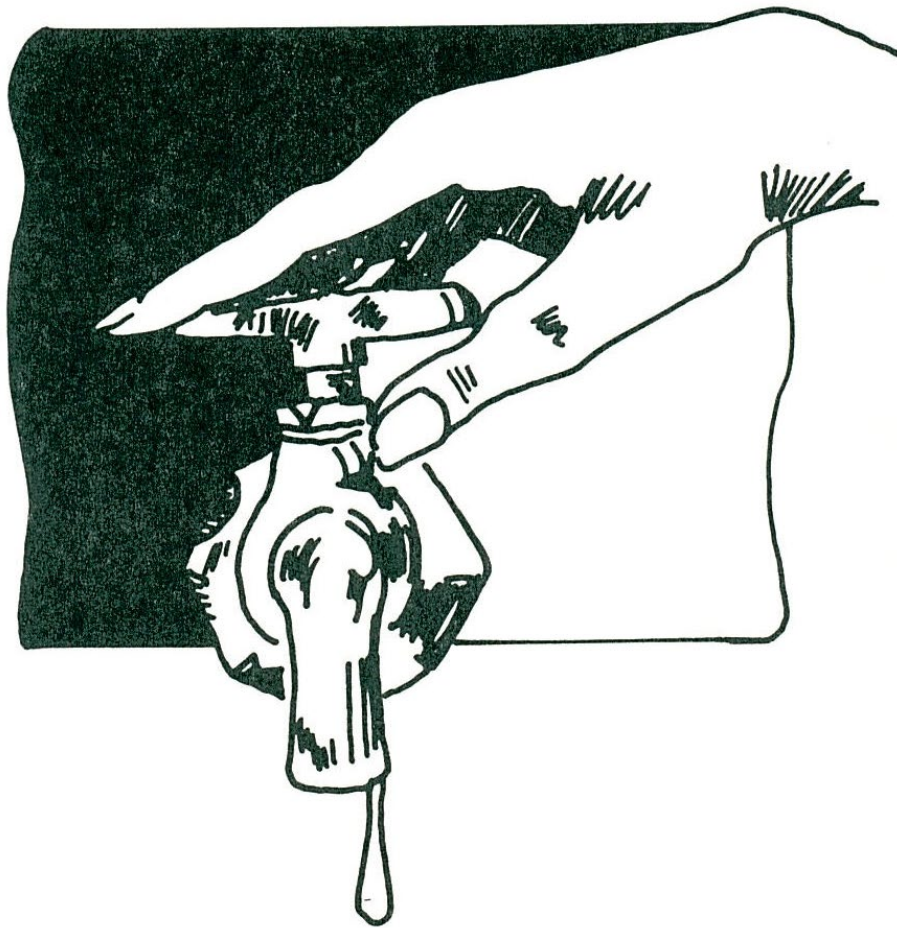


When people clean up their wastes, the water in creeks and rivers and under the ground stays clean.





Much is being done to help our water,  
but much more still needs to be done.  
Everyone needs to help!



Using less water means there is less dirty water to clean.



Recycling solid waste means there is less waste to bury or incinerate.





Everyone can help do this!

# Think About It



Do you know where the waste water from your house goes when you flush the toilet or wash the dishes?

Do some detective work to find out and discuss in class.





Do you know what creek and river your town's treated waste water is poured into?

Investigate and learn how that creek or river connects to other water bodies within the Nueces River Basin.





What if you live out in the country, where does your waste water go when you flush the toilet or wash dishes?

People living in the country must treat their own waste water with a “septic system”. These people must be extra careful to make sure their waste water does not pollute a creek or river.



Do you know where the solid waste from your house goes when you put a banana peel or paper plate in the trash can?

Find out where your town's solid waste landfill is located and how it operates. Find out about your local recycling center.





What if you live out in the country, where does your solid waste go when you put a banana peel or paper plate in the trash can?

People living in the country must take their solid waste to a pickup place. These people must be extra careful that all their solid waste gets taken to a solid waste facility and does not pollute a creek or river.



# You can help keep our water clean.



Produced by

Nueces River Authority

Texas Commission on Environmental  
Quality

