

Law Day 2010: Law in the 21st Century

Emerging Challenges and Enduring Traditions

Our natural environment consists of all living and non-living things that occur naturally on Earth. The living things include all plants and animals (including humans). The non-living things include water, air, rocks and minerals. In a perfect world, every person, plant and animal on earth would live in a pollutant-free community, with clean

sources of renewable energy. But, we don't live in a perfect world.

The governing bodies of the world have had to establish rules and regulations regarding the use and misuse of our natural resources. In the US, passage of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act and establishment of the

◆ Environmental Regulation ◆

“If we are going to carry on growing, and we will, because no country is going to forfeit its right to economic growth, we have to find a way of doing it sustainably.”

Tony Blair,
Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (1997-2007)

Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 reinforced our nation's commitment to a safe and healthy environment. The EPA's mission is to, “...protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment—air, water, and land—upon which life depends.” In New York State, some of the priorities of the Department of Environmental Conservation include combatting climate change, fostering green and healthy communities, connecting New Yorkers to nature and safeguarding New York's unique natural assets.

Newspaper Activities:

- ◆ Look through the newspaper for examples of people enjoying our natural environment or for stories about risks endangering nature.
- ◆ Use newspapers, magazines and other sources to research how the world's governments are trying to find solutions for re-usable or renewable resources, energy and the protection of our air, water and land.
- ◆ Research what your local regulations say about recycling. Do you think they are the best they can be? If not, as a class write a persuasive essay (similar to a newspaper editorial) describing how your recycling rules should change. Be sure to support your opinion with facts.

For more about the EPA go to www.epa.gov/kids/

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The governing bodies of the world have had to establish rules and regulations regarding the use and misuse of our natural resources. In the US, passage of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act and establishment of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970 reinforced our nation's commitment to a safe and healthy environment. The EPA's mission is to, "...protect human health and to safeguard the natural environment—air, water, and land—upon which life depends." In New York State, some of the priorities of the Department of Environmental Conservation include combatting climate change, fostering green and healthy communities, connecting New Yorkers to nature and safeguarding New York's unique natural assets.

For more about the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency go to www.epa.gov/kids/

Newspaper Activity 1:

Look through the newspaper for examples of people enjoying our natural environment or for stories about risks endangering nature. List what you found in the chart below. Where you surprised by anything you learned?

Enjoying Nature	Endangering Nature

◆ Environmental Regulation ◆

Newspaper Activity 2:

Use newspapers, magazines and other sources to research how the world's governments are trying to find solutions for re-usable or renewable resources, energy and the protection of our air, water and land. Organize what you've found in the chart below.

Country	Resource	Policy/Action
Nations/organizations working together:		

Newspaper Activity 3:

Research what your local regulations say about recycling. Do you think they are the best they can be? If not, write a persuasive essay (similar to a newspaper editorial) describing how your recycling rules should change. Be sure to support your opinion with facts. *This can be done on the back of this sheet to conserve paper.*