KEEP GREATER MILWAUKEE BEAUTIFUL

Luscious Layered Landfill

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Keep Greater Milwaukee Beautiful

Objective: Learn about the layers of landfills and what they are for

Landfills are not composed only of trash. They consist of many important layers to help eliminate pests, odor, and fire hazards.

The different layers also prevent waste from leaking into the ground or groundwater. Any liquids or gases produced by decaying waste are harvested by drains or pipes to be taken and treated elsewhere.

In the United States, there are over 1,250 landfills; the Midwest and southern regions having the most.

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Supplies Needed

-Small plastic cup
-Box of raisins
-Fruit roll up
-2 graham crackers
-2 licorice sticks
-Ice Cream
-Whipped Cream
-Knife and fork
-M&M candies
-5 Oreo cookies

1. Break 2 of the 5 cookies into small pieces and place in the bottom of your cup. This represents the layer of soil and clay that is placed in the bottom of landfills.

2. Next, take the fruit roll up and carefully cut it into a circle larger than the circumference of the cup. You want it to cover the cookies and to push up on the sides of the cup. This represents the plastic liner that prevents and liquid from leaking into the ground or groundwater.

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3. On top of the fruit roll up, crush up the graham crackers finely and sprinkle on top, modeling a sand layer. Then add raisins on top of the crushed crackers to represent pebbles. Both layers also help with any leakage.

4. Next, take the licorice and cut off each end. Then cut a piece the diameter of the cup and lay on top of the raisin/pebble layer. The licorice represents a pipe that collect any liquids before it gets to the liners.

5. Now comes an alternating layer of M&M candies and ice cream. The candies represent the trash from people. The ice cream is the seepage made when rain falls on the garbage.

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6. Crush the remaining cookies and place on top. This is soil that will absorb as much rain as possible before it leaks to the garbage layers below.

7. Finally, top with whipped cream. This cap covers the landfill to prevent pests and odor. Time to eat your landfill!

Questions to Consider:

-What happens when a landfill becomes too full?

-What happens if a landfill is constructed improperly?

-How can you reduce the amount of trash that goes to a landfill?

Source: https://www.epa.gov/sites/default/files/2015-09/documents/qfl_complete.pdf

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