

HEALTHY SCHOOLS

Serving Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma,
New Mexico, Texas and 66 Tribes



Helping Kids Learn in a Pollution Free Environment

Explore the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

The Flower Garden Banks were first discovered by snapper and grouper fishermen in the early 1900s. They named the banks after the sponges, plants, and other marine life they could see on the colorful reefs below their boats.

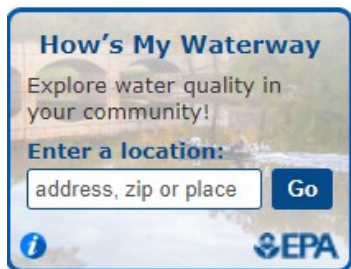
On October 27, 2012, Flower Garden Banks

National Marine Sanctuary was [formally listed under the Special Protected Areas and Wildlife \(SPA/W\) Protocol](#) of the Cartagena Convention. Eligible sites for listing under the SPA/W Protocol are those coastal and marine areas that are ecologically important to the Wider Caribbean region.

In signing the SPA/W Protocol, the U.S. committed

to take the necessary measures to protect, preserve and sustainably manage areas that require conservation to safeguard their special value, and threatened or endangered species of flora and fauna. Such areas include representative habitats, critical habitats, economically and/or socially valuable areas, and areas of special significance.

On January 19, 2021, after approximately 14 years of scientific analysis, consultation, and public input, the [sanctuary was expanded](#) to include portions of [14 additional reefs and banks](#) across the northwestern Gulf of Mexico. This increased the sanctuary size from 56 to 160 square miles.



[How's My Waterway](#) was designed to provide the public at large with information about the condition of their local waters based on data that states, federal, tribal, local agencies and others have provided to the EPA.

Water quality information is displayed on 3 scales in How's My Waterway: community, state and national. More recent or more detailed water information may exist that is not yet available through EPA databases or other sources.

How's My Waterway? Informing the Conversation About Waters in Your Community, State or the Nation

Use How's My Waterway to learn about your water, explore data, and find out what's happening in your community — anywhere, anytime.

Map-centric and mobile-friendly, How's My Waterway works on all different screen sizes ranging from desktop computers and tablets to mobile phones.

What will I find?

Community: Learn about the health of your waters, identified issues, why the issues matter, and what's being done to restore or protect the waters. Find out more about your drinking water. Discover if waters in your community are suitable for swimming or eating fish and if they support aquatic life.

State: Choose a state to find basic facts about a state's waters, summaries of specific water assessments, a statewide survey of water quality where available, and state drinking water metrics.

National: Learn about the quality of water resources across the nation (lakes, rivers and streams, wetlands, and coastal areas) and the main challenges to our water resources nationwide. You will also find information about national drinking water quality and national drinking water metrics.





EPA and the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) offer several online activities to help children, families, K-12 school groups and others learn about water quality and how they can help solve water quality problems.

Learning Links—Watershed Academy and the K-12 Watershed Learning Links

Individuals are encouraged to participate in NEEF's Interactive Watershed Sleuth Challenge.

[The Watershed Sleuth Challenge](#) is a three-part course where participants will learn more about their watershed—what it is, why it's important, and what can be done to protect it. The focus of each lesson is listed below:

- Lesson 1 focuses on watershed basics,
- Lesson 2 focuses on things we do at home that threaten water quality and steps to take to reduce these threats, and
- Lesson 3 focuses on the state of your community.

Upon completion of a course level, participants will

earn a digital badge to show off their watershed knowledge.

Additional kid-friendly nonpoint source (NPS) information, including activities and science resources, can be found at [EPA's NPS Kids page](#).



Notes for Nurses—Services of the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units

Education of public health professionals regarding environmental health issues impacting children

Telephone consultation and educational conferences and programs for pediatricians, family practice physicians, nursing professionals and environmental health professionals using distance learning networks and live presentations at regional health professions meetings. A web page providing links to pediatric environmental health resources.

Educational services to the public regarding environmental health issues impacting children

Telephone consultation, consultation with your local health care provider, training opportunities to health departments poison centers, environmental agencies, and community and faith-based groups. Participate in limited community-based efforts to educate children directly.

More information on services available from the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty unit for Region 6, you can reach the Southwest Center for Pediatric Environmental Health at <https://www.swcpeh.org/>.



Participation in the Safer Choice program is voluntary. Companies who make products carrying the Safer Choice label have invested heavily in research and reformulation to ensure that their products meet the [Safer Choice Standard](#).

Every ingredient is reviewed: Before a product can carry the Safer Choice

label, EPA reviews all chemical ingredients. Every ingredient must meet strict safety criteria for both human health and the environment. This means that Safer Choice-labeled products are safer for you, your family, pets, workers, fish and the environment.

Product performance: Products that qualify to carry the Safer Choice label must pass category-specific

performance standards as defined in the [Safer Choice Standard](#). All products must perform comparably to conventional products.

Packaging: Safer Choice reviews all product packaging against criteria defined in the [Safer Choice Standard](#). Partners are required to implement sustainable packaging measures and to improve the packaging profile for

their recognized products during the partnership.

pH: Labeled products must meet pH standards that minimize the potential for skin and eye irritation or injury.

Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs): Safer Choice restricts VOC content to minimize indoor air pollution and associated respiratory concerns.

What is the Climate Superstars Challenge?

Climate Superstars is an online environmental challenge that gets kids excited about the environment and how they can take an active role in caring for its future.

During the challenge, middle school classrooms (Grades 6-8) complete short [tasks](#) geared towards environmental literacy and energy efficiency. Classes that complete at least 7 [tasks](#) in the month of October (1-31) will be entered into a drawing to win **one of six \$5,000 e-vouchers for Samsung**

products like tablets, laptops, and interactive displays to modernize their classrooms.

If you are a middle school teacher (grades 6-8)* in the United States, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico, simply [register](#) your class and get set for the October 1 start!

Tasks are Next Generation Science Standard-aligned learning activities that take roughly 15-20 minutes to complete. They're easy to fit into your daily schedule as a fun complement to your

lesson plans and can be performed online or in-person.

- You can complete the tasks at your pace—one a day, two a day, or all in one day.
- All tasks are available on the first day of the Challenge (Oct.1), so you can choose which ones to do.

[See task list and examples.](#)

Here is an [Educator Guide](#) with supplemental material

to give each task context, lesson suggestions, and resources. [Download now!](#)

Teach.
Play.
Win.



What Is the Clean Air in Buildings Challenge?

The “Clean Air in Buildings Challenge” is a call to action and a set of guiding principles and best practices to assist building owners and operators with reducing risks from airborne viruses and other contaminants indoors. The Clean Air in Buildings Challenge highlights a range of recommendations and resources available for improving ventilation and indoor air quality, which can help to better protect the health of building occupants and reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread.

Key actions outlined in the Clean Air in Buildings Challenge include: Create a clean indoor air action plan; [Enhance air filtration and cleaning](#), and; Conduct community engagement, communication and education.

While the recommended actions cannot completely eliminate risks, they will reduce them. Infectious diseases like COVID-19 can spread through the inhalation of airborne particles and aerosols. In addition to other layered prevention strategies, like vaccination, wearing masks and physical distancing to reduce the spread of infectious diseases like COVID-19, actions to improve ventilation, filtration and other proven air cleaning strategies can reduce the risk of exposure to particles, aerosols, and other contaminants, and improve indoor air quality and the health of building occupants.

It's Spring!

Time to Spruce Up Your Sprinkler System in Four Simple Steps



INSPECT

sprinkler heads. A broken one can waste **25,000 gallons** of water in six months!



CONNECT

hoses and pipes well. A leak as small as the tip of a pen can waste **6,300 gallons** of water per month!



DIRECT

spray on landscapes, not pavement.



SELECT

a WaterSense® labeled irrigation controller and water smarter.



epa.gov/watersense/outdoors



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Protecting human health and the environment.

Click on adjacent box for Integrated Pest Management and Asbestos in Schools Refresher



HELPFUL HINT: Click on the pictures or logos for more information!

[Sustainable Management of Food, Disposal of Batteries, Electronics, and Electronic Appliances and Compact Fluorescent Light Bulbs:](#)

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[Safer Choice, Pollution Prevention, and Sustainable Materials Management:](#) Melanie Lillard, lillard.melanie@epa.gov, 214 665-7588

[Lead Based Paint:](#) Mikeal Adams, adams.mikeal@epa.gov, 214 665-6711

[Integrated Pest Management:](#) Ken McPherson, mcperson.kenneth@epa.gov, 214 665-6754

[Pollution Prevention and Source Reduction Assistance Grant Programs:](#) Stephanie Cheaney, cheaney.stephanie@epa.gov, 214 665-8057

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[Ground Water:](#) Scott Ellinger, ellinger.scott@epa.gov, 214 665-8408

[Drinking Water:](#) Angela Restivo, restivo.angela@epa.gov, 214 665-7123

[Trash Free Waters:](#) Rachel Renz and Renee Bellew, renz.rachel@epa.gov and bellew.renee@epa.gov, 214 665-3129 and 214 665-2793, respectively.

[PCBs:](#) Anupa Ahuja, ahuja.anupa@epa.gov, 214 665-2701

[WaterSense:](#) Adam Weece, weece.adam@epa.gov, 214 665-2264

AMERICA'S CHILDREN AND THE ENVIRONMENT

ODDS AND ENDS

Upcoming Newsletters

In our next issue, the Region 6 Healthy Schools Newsletter in September 2022 will highlight the following:

Contact

- National Public Lands Day,
- Pollution Prevention Week, and
- Children's Health Month.

Disclaimer

Feedback

Other topics will include National Lead Poisoning Prevention week, National Reuse Month, America Recycles Day, and Radon and Lung Cancer Awareness Month in addition to the quarterly columns on Notes for Nurses, Custodian's Closet, and Learning Links.

Healthy Schools is published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 6 - South Central in Dallas, Texas. Region 6 includes the states of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas as well as 66 Tribes.

For general information about Healthy Schools, to provide feedback on this newsletter, or to be added or removed from the distribution list, please contact Cathy Gilmore, Senior Environmental Employee (SEE) for Healthy Schools, at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov.

We would love your feedback on this newsletter or suggestions for future topics. Please email EPA at Gilmore.cathy@epa.gov.

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