Water Challenge Guide:
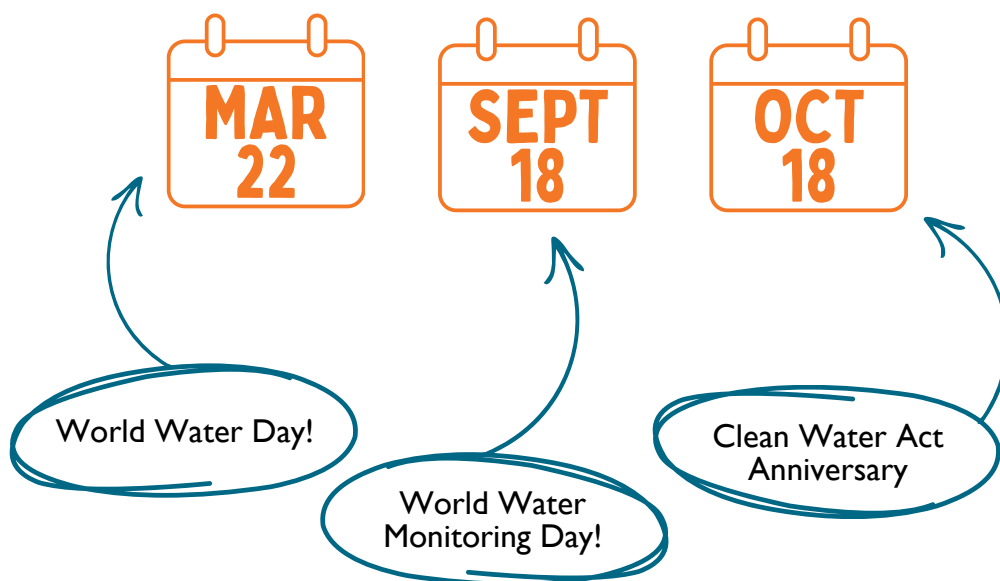## Restore and Protect Your Local Water Resources

Rise to the Challenge

This guide outlines how individuals, corporations, and communities can take action to protect and restore local water resources. It contains everything you need to know about the EarthEcho Water Challenge so that you can feel confident leading or joining water quality testing initiatives, community cleanups, policy and grassroots advocacy campaigns, and generally helping to educate and raise awareness about the importance of safe and clean water.

No matter where you are or the time of year, there are actions you can take to help safeguard precious water resources!

Join us in celebrating these key dates:

MAR 22 — World Water Day!

SEPT 18 — World Water Monitoring Day!

OCT 18 — Clean Water Act Anniversary

Why Is Water Important?

Water covers about 70 percent of the Earth's surface, therefore it may appear that we have an abundant supply. However, 97 percent of that supply is salt water, and 2 percent is fresh water frozen in glaciers. That leaves only 1 percent as a readily usable resource for drinking, cooking, bathing, agriculture, industry, recreation, and other needs.

This limited supply of fresh water, and our dependency on it, means that we must use this resource wisely. Every human being plays an important role in caring for water. It is our responsibility to manage our local, regional, and national waters respectfully. Government efforts alone cannot provide the range and variety of information needed to assess water quality in each watershed. Therefore, it is essential that communities become involved in protecting the health of their local waterbodies. Community members who are willing to build upon governmental efforts play an important role in helping to protect local watersheds. We invite you to rise to the challenge by Checking your local resources, Sharing your data with our global database, and taking tangible action to Protect our waters!

"All living things – plants, animals, and human beings – require clean water. As users of water and citizens of planet Earth, we must take responsibility for our impact on water quality. Recognizing that education and awareness are important first steps toward action, we challenge you to test the quality of your waterways, share your findings, and protect our most precious resource."

- Philippe Cousteau, Jr. Founder, EarthEcho International

The EarthEcho Water Challenge

The EarthEcho Water Challenge is a signature program that equips young leaders around the world to become community scientists, testing their local water quality, sharing their data through our global database at monitorwater.org, and using this data to inform actions to protect local waterways. To date, this program has activated over 1.81 million participants in 157 countries to protect and advocate for their local water resources.

Participate in the Water Challenge!

Check
It all starts by understanding the state of water quality in your community.

Share
Enter your data online to our global database at monitorwater.org, then be sure to share your story and photos with us on social media by tagging @EarthEcho.

Protect
Armed with your test results, you can use the information and resources available on monitorwater.org to take action and protect the vital water resources in your community.

Test Water Quality

The EarthEcho Water Challenge makes it easy for individuals and groups to test local waterways and identify potential issues. Note: Some steps relate specifically to the EarthEcho Water Challenge test kit, but you can use other test kits, including probe meters, in-water data loggers, and additional water quality testing tools. Follow this check list to conduct testing:

☐ **Create Your Account**
Create a MonitorWater Account at app.monitorwater.org/login.

☐ **Gather Supplies**
Order a Water Challenge Test kit at monitorwater.org/kit-order. Once you receive your kit, assemble all necessary monitoring equipment to ensure you have everything needed for testing.

☐ **Select a Site Location**
Choose a water body that you're curious about... this could be a beach, river, creek, or local pond! Make sure that the site is accessible and is safe.

☐ **Review Water Testing Instructions and Educational Presentation**
Before testing, review the Water Challenge kit instructions included in your kit, they are also available online. If you are leading a group, take time to go through the Water Challenge Educational Presentation.

☐ **Invite Others to Join**
Reach out to members of your community. Gather volunteers from workplace, school clubs, local environmental organizations, or elsewhere to join you!

☐ **Test Your Local Body of Water**
This is the fun part! Go out to your local waterway and check it's quality! Be sure to practice safe water sampling methods and properly dispose of waste. Be sure to write down your results right after taking them!

☐ **Record and Report Your Results**
Now that you tested your local water quality, it's time to share the results.
Visit monitorwater.org, enter your data, and contribute to a global database that already features over 1.81 million participants!

☐ **Take Action**
Using your visit to the local waterway and water testing results, determine the necessary actions to protect it—whether through a cleanup event, restoration efforts, or an advocacy campaign.

Host a Cleanup

Taking action to *Protect* your local water resources starts with something as simple as a cleanup. By removing litter, you help improve water quality and protect the environment. Here's how you can get started:

1 Select a Location

Identify an area in your community that could benefit from a cleanup such as beaches, riverbanks, or parks near water.

2 Get Permission

Before planning your cleanup, check with the park office, municipality, or property owner to make sure you have permission to be there.

3 Recruit Volunteers

Use your network to gather friends, classmates, community groups, or local organizations to build your cleanup team.

4 Spread the Word

Use flyers, social media, and community centers to spread the word. Include clear instructions about what to bring and what to wear.

5 Gather Supplies

Make sure you have gloves, trash bags, recycling bins, and safety equipment like first-aid kits on hand the day of your event.

6 Host Your Event

Assign people to different areas, ensure everyone knows to separate trash from recyclables, and record what you collect.
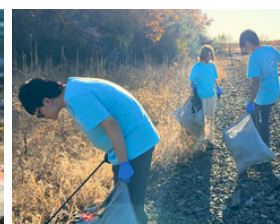
7 Record Impact

After, share your data on monitorwater.org under the "Plogging/Coastal Clean up/Water Action Survey."

8 Share Your Story and Raise Awareness

Celebrate your success by sharing your cleanup story online and through your community networks.

Submit your experience at monitorwater.org/news/submit-story.

Engage in Policy Work

Protecting your local water resources goes beyond water quality testing and cleanups—advocating for better policies can lead to long-term change. Whether you're new to advocacy or looking to take your efforts further, here's how you can get started:

Identify Concerns

Research the water-related concerns in your state or local community through water quality testing or using online tools. Some online tools that are helpful can include: How's My Waterway (U.S), Water Risk Indicator, and Global Water's Quality Hub Indicators. Common concerns can be water pollution, water infrastructure, changes in environmental laws, or large scale projects.

Identify Key Decision-Makers

Who are the key decision makers in your area? They could be elected officials, city council members, regional/state legislators, or environmental agencies. If you live in the United States, you can look up your national elected officials here.

Now that you know what the concern in your area is and who to reach out to, let's talk about ways to advocate for change in your community...

Raise Awareness!
Connect with others in your area about your concern through social media, public meetings, or community events. Use this opportunity to communicate your concern and invite the feedback of others.

Connect Youth Advocates!
GenSea is a digital hub for young ocean advocates, ages 13-25, to learn, network, and take collective action. By encouraging young people to join this free community, you can help ensure the durability of our movement!

Support Policy Change!
Follow proposed legislation related to water protection and take action— create a sign on letter campaign, sign existing petitions, and/or attend public hearings.

Contact your Reps!
Reach out to your local or state officials via phone or email. Share your concerns and advocate for better water policies and protections.

Raise Awareness

Social media is a powerful tool to *Share* water issues, inspire action, and rally support. Whether through posts, stories, or videos, your voice can drive change. Start the conversation and help protect our water!

Awareness days like *World Water Day*, *World Water Monitoring Day*, and the Anniversary of the *Clean Water Act* are great opportunities to educate your followers, start conversations with your partners, or rally your employees to come together for a good cause.

Are these awareness days on your calendar?

MAR 22   **SEPT 18**   **OCT 18**

EarthEcho International and the youth ocean advocates we support are also always interested in new and meaningful ways to partner with community members. If you have questions, need support, or want to discuss an idea for collaboration, reach out to us at wwmc@earthecho.org!

Not Sure What To Say? Start Here!

Sample Social for World Water Day (March 22)
Water is life, yet millions still lack access to clean, safe water. Today, on World Water Day, let's recognize the importance of protecting this precious resource for future generations. Every drop counts—let's use it wisely and advocate for clean water for all. #WorldWaterDay

⬇ **Download Shareable Assets**

Sample Social for World Water Monitoring Day (September 18)
Our team took action for #WorldWaterMonitoringDay by testing the water quality of our local river with an @EarthEcho Water Challenge Test Kit. Clean water starts with knowing what's in it, and our results show why continued protection and restoration efforts matter. Let's all do our part to keep our waterways safe and healthy!

Sample Social for Clean Water Act Day (October 18)
The #CleanWaterAct has protected our rivers, lakes, and drinking water for over 50 years, but its future depends on us. Call your representatives today and urge them to strengthen—not weaken—water protections in our district. Our health, communities, and environment depend on it.

Sample Language for Newsletter
Today is [World Water Day/World Water Monitoring Day/the Anniversary of the Clean Water Act], a reminder that clean water is essential for people and the planet. You can take action by testing your local water quality using an EarthEcho Water Challenge Test Kit, organizing a cleanup to remove pollution from nearby waterways, or calling your representatives to advocate for stronger water protections. Every action—big or small—helps protect this vital resource for future generations. Join us in making a difference today!

Stay Connected!

Stay up to date with EarthEcho International, the Water Challenge, and our youth programs by following us on social media!

Education@EarthEcho.org
www.EarthEcho.org

@EarthEcho