**Overview:** *When Congress passed the Clean Water Act in 1972, it called for America’s waterways to be swimmable and fishable again by 1983. Yet many of our waterways are still in peril and they face new waves of pollution. From 1972 to 1982 the EPA was a tough enforcement agency for industrial polluters. They made significant gains in reducing smog in the sky, algae in the rivers and human waste disposal in city treatment facilities. It launched Superfund to clean up at the nation’s worst industrial sites. By targeting “point source pollution, the EPA repaired the worst damage. Today the threat is invisible. Many consumer products contain contaminants –from cleaning products to pesticides to lawn care products to personal care products. When it rains, storm water runoff from roads and highways carry a toxic cocktail of chemicals to nearby rivers, streams and bays. Agricultural runoff ends up in rivers and the Atlantic Ocean and this runoff carries bacteria and nitrates and phosphates which fertilize harmful alga. Millions of people now live within 50 miles of the nation’s waterways. Construction and growth have caused sediment pollution. (from* **Poisoned Waters** *discussion guide)*

Discussion Questions:

1. What are the main symptoms of economic decline (ie. Effects on communities and industry) in the Chesapeake Bay?
2. What is a dead zone?
3. What are the most widespread pollutants on Chesapeake Bay?
4. Why are Orca whales a good indicator of the health of a marine environment?(ie. Thinks about what it has in common with people of the Arctic)
5. Why are industrial chemicals such as PCB, dioxins, . . . . so harmful to species in nature?
6. What is the connection between farm manure runoff and the decline of waterways like the Chesapeake Bay?
7. What is the mission of the EPA’s superfund?
8. Why do impervious surfaces (like asphalt and concrete) increase the storm water runoff problem?
9. What is storm water run off and why is it so difficult to detect and regulate?