

**SIPPING WATER**

Sunflowers to the Rescue!

Soil contains water that plants need to survive. But when chemicals and toxins are released into the environment from careless human activities, such as industrial activities and improper waste disposal, soil can become contaminated, which has negative impacts on crops and humans.

After trying various cleanup methods, scientists have discovered that plants with strong “sucking power” can help. Sunflowers, for example, are special because they can grow and survive in soils with high levels of toxins. While growing, they can absorb lead and other toxins from the soil and safely store them within themselves.

In 2013, the town of High River in Alberta was hit by a severe flood. Unfortunately, the flood waters carried toxins which settled throughout the community when the waters receded. To solve the problem, the town planted sunflowers everywhere. Thanks to the sunflowers, the community of High River can enjoy a safe and toxin-free environment again.

