

GET THE FACTS: SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

SINGLE-USE PLASTICS

Single-use plastics are designed to be used just once. They are most commonly used for packaging and include: bottles, wrappers, straws, bags, utensils and carry-out containers.

WHY ARE THEY DANGEROUS? PLASTIC IS FOREVER.

Since the 1950s, humans have produced more than 8 billion tons of plastic with less than ten percent being recycled. This plastic is in our environment in one form or another.

Environmental

Single-use plastics find their way into the natural environment. They clog waterways, sewage drains and are ingested by wildlife.

Human

Plastics leach toxic chemicals into the environment as they degrade, which is then absorbed by our crops and eaten by animals. This is how it enters our food supply. These toxic chemicals are concentrated as they move up the food chain, where they are eventually consumed by humans.

Economic

Studies indicate that plastics damage the world's marine ecosystems and this causes an economic impact of at least \$13 billion every year.



PREVENTION IS KEY.

REFUSE ➡ REDUCE ➡ REUSE ➡ REPURPOSE ➡ RECYCLE

Single use plastics are a unique threat due to their sheer volume, which only worsens the crisis of plastic pollution. For example, every year up to 3 trillion plastic bags are used around the world. The average American family alone uses, on average, 1,500 plastic bags a year and 99% of plastic bags are buried in landfills or pollute the natural environment.

Every bit of plastic ever manufactured still exists.

Refusing Single-Use Plastic is a vital way to help the planet.



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Natural Resources Defense Council, nrdc.org/stories/single-use-plastics-101#what
Sustainability Forum, sustainabilityforum.com/infographic-how-to-reduce-single-use-swaps-infographic
Reuse This Bag, reusethisbag.com/articles/the-truth-about-paper-bags



WHAT WE CAN DO

Prevention is key. You can refuse, reduce, reuse, repurpose, and then recycle, in that order. For example: refuse plastic bags for 1-2 item purchases and bring usable bags for shopping. Refuse a straw. Refuse to use plastic bags for produce. Reduce purchasing food packaged in plastic.

SOURCES:

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