

Mother Earth Is Asking Us for Help!

What's the Issue?

- Plastics were made convenient after World War II when plastic manufacturers needed a way to continue to sell their products. Since 1950, plastic use has increased from 2.3 million tons to 448 million tons.¹
- More than 40 % of plastic is used just once and then tossed. Only 9% of all plastic ever produced has been recycled. Although 12% of plastic trash can be incinerated, only 79% goes in the landfill. Estimates for how long plastic endures range from 450 years to forever.
- More than five trillion pieces of plastic are already floating in our oceans. (*National Geographic* #PlanetorPlastic). From poisoning and injuring marine life to disrupting human hormones, from littering our beaches and landscapes to clogging our waste streams and landfills, the exponential growth of plastics is now threatening the survival of our planet (Earth Day Network).
- Chlorinated plastic can release harmful chemicals into the surrounding soil which can then seep into groundwater or other surrounding **water** sources as well as the ecosystem of the world.



Chemicals added to plastics are absorbed by human bodies. Some of these compounds have been found to alter hormones or have other potential human health effects.



- Plastic debris, laced with chemicals and often ingested by marine animals, can injure or poison wildlife.
- Floating plastic waste can survive for thousands of years in water. Over 700 species of animals have ingested plastic and by 2050, every seabird species will be eating it.²
- Around 4% of world oil production is used as a feedstock to make plastics and a similar amount is consumed as energy in the process.

Acting on Our Corporate Stand, What Can We Do to Help?

Take personal responsibility for the plastic pollution that each one of us generates by choosing to reduce, reuse, recycle, and refuse plastics.

- Bring your own reusable shopping and produce bags to markets.
- Avoid using single-use **plastic** bags.
- Bring your own reusable coffee cup when going out to get beverages.
- Instead of buying water in **plastic** bottles, invest in a water filter and reusable water bottle(s). Bonus: it's cheaper in the long run.
- Stop using plastic straws, even in restaurants.
- Recycle plastic bags at supermarkets, pharmacies, etc. which have a designated bin for bags.
- Learn more about this problem – review the [Plastic Pollution Primer and Action Toolkit](#).



¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQdBag_p6kE

² 1