The Plastic Dilemma

http://eldorado285recycles.org/index.html
Plastic is good because.....

Plastic is bad because.....

How much plastic is there? 8.3 billion tons!
What happens to plastic?

- 9% get recycled.
- 12% is incinerated.
- 79% goes to the landfill, or into the ocean.
How long does it take for plastic to decompose?

- Styrofoam cup: 50 years
- Baby diaper: 450 years
- Plastic bottle*: 450 years
- Plastic straw*: 450 years

*Plastic straws: More than 500 million straws are thrown away each day in the U.S. alone.
*Some 480 billion plastic bottles were sold globally in 2016
The danger to marine life (and human life)

- 100,000 marine animals dying each year from plastic ingestion. Plastic bags are often mistaken for jellyfish, the main source of food for many marine animals.

- 1 million seabirds die each year from plastic consumption, mistaken for natural food such as fish eggs or shrimps…

- Every year, 8 million metric tons of plastic end up in our oceans. It’s equivalent to five grocery bags filled with plastic for every foot of coastline in the world.
Be Careful What Fish You Eat

• The effect on humans of eating fish containing plastic is unknown.

• We need to do something: **Rethink!**
• Plastic is a large part of our lives and has made life easier in many ways: cars, fashion, homes, appliances, sports, health & food packaging....
A Short Timeline of Plastic

- Polystyrene (1839)
- Parkesine (1862)
- Celluloid (1865)
- Rayon (1891)
- Bakelite (1907)
- Cellophane (1912)
- Vinyl (1920s)
- "Plastic" (1930s)
- Polyethylene (1930s)
- Polyvinylidene Chloride (1933)
- Nylon (1939)
- Polyester (1950)
- Polypropylene
- Polystyrene foam (1954)
PET: Water and soft drink bottles, salad domes, biscuit trays, salad dressing & peanut butter containers.

HDPE: Milk bottles, freezer bags, dip tubs, crinkly shopping bags, ice cream containers, juice bottles, shampoo, chemical & detergent bottles.

PVC: Cosmetic containers, commercial cling wrap.

LDPE: Squeeze bottles, cling wrap, shrink wrap, rubbish bags.
PLASTIC RESIN TYPES & APPLICATIONS IN PACKAGING
https://www.containerandpackaging.com/

- **PP**: Microwave dishes, ice cream tubs, potato chip bags, and dip tubs.

- **PS**: CD cases, water station cups, plastic cutlery, imitation “crystal glassware”, video cases.

- **EPS**: Foamed polystyrene hot drink cups, hamburger take-away clamshells, foamed meat trays, protective packaging for fragile items.

- **OTHERS**: Water cooler bottles, flexible films, multi-material packaging.
A few small steps

• Refuse straws.

• Buy products with less plastic packaging.

• Buy in bulk.

• Use a reusable produce bag.

• Bring your own containers for take-out.

• Refuse plastic ware at home and with take-out-carry your own reusable cutlery.
A few small steps

• Give up bottled water and carry a refillable water bottle.

• Make your own juice instead of buying bottles.

• Make your own cleaning products.

• Pack your lunch in reusable containers.

• Use a razor with replaceable blades.

• Use cloth diapers: 7.6 billion diapers are discarded in the US each year.
A few small steps

• An important goal will be to create a more circular model so that plastic, which is designed to last forever, is no longer single use and an “untaxed negative externality.” A concept coined by Elon Musk.
Reduce
Karen Sweeney

- We can all do something to reduce demand.
Reduce the use of Plastics

- Seek Alternatives At Home

- Plastic wrap to cover food?

- Use reusable bowl cover or reusable wrap.

- Store food in plastic containers?

- Use glass instead.
Reduce The Use of Plastics

• Take your own water in plastic bottle?

• Use glass or metal container; your health may depend on it!

• Bring your own container for take-out or restaurant doggy-bag.

• Pack your lunch in reusable containers and bags.

• Use fresh fruits and veggies instead of products that come in single serving cups/bags.
Be Proactive

• Speak Up.
• Write a letter.
• Join an online campaign.
Refuse

Sue Garfitt

- If we Refuse to buy plastic products then we have no plastic refuse.
- If we Refuse to buy plastic wrapped or plastic enclosed products.
- If we Refuse to use Plastic bags for all those left overs.
Refuse to Buy Plastic Products

• If we Refuse plastic shopping bags...

• If we Refuse individual servings...

• If we Refuse plastic straws....

• Refuse plastic and rethink our daily living.
Reuse
Marcia Spears-Cihon

• Is Reusing plastic water bottles dangerous?

• Freezing, heating, leaving in a car.

• Bottled water contaminates.
Reuse Ideas

- The single use disposable straw.
Reuse Ideas

- Some good news about plastic bag litter.
Reuse Ideas

- How to reuse NON RECYCLABLE bags.
500 million straws are used every day in the U.S.

Straws are one of the top 5 plastic waste items found in beach clean-ups.

Straws are a single use plastic item made out of polypropylene, sourced from fossil fuels, which never biodegrade.

Ask your restaurant wait-person to Skip the Straw!

Suggest they use paper or compostable straws!

Making a difference happens one small straw at a time!
Recycle
Karen Sweeney
Recycle Right

- Follow the rules!
- China means business.
- Don’t contaminate.
- Aspirational Recycling.

A laborer works at an auto scrapyard in Zhejiang, China, in 2015
What are Contaminants?

- Film.
- Food Residue.
- Tanglers.
- Styrofoam.
- Other Opportunities.
Recycle Right
LaTienda, Building A
The Plastic Dilemma
Questions & Answers