



Tips on Reducing Plastic and Information on the Plastic Bag Ban

As of March 1, 2020 New York State law bans single-use plastic bags, with exemptions for restaurants and pharmacies. Now is a good time to train yourself to bring your own reusable bags to the grocery store, and always carry a tote for other purchases.

For more information on the ban:

For residents: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/50034.html>

For merchants: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/117781.html>

Info on recycling of film plastic:

For residents: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/50042.html>

For merchants: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/50058.html>

Plastic is made with fossil fuels; it is not “natural” and although it eventually, very slowly, breaks down into micro-pieces, it is not absorbed into natural life cycles the way organic material is. Less than 10% of the plastic ever produced has been recycled. (For more information: www.nationalgeographic.com/news/2017/07/plastic-produced-recycling-waste-ocean-trash-debris-environment/).

Plastic is mucking up the natural world big time, and threatening life in ways we don’t fully understand. Several sources have reported that fish now contain microscopic plastic in their flesh and when we eat the fish, we incorporate the plastic into our own flesh. What this means in terms of the health of living organisms remains largely unknown.

22 Facts About Plastic Pollution (And 10 Things We Can Do About It): <https://www.ecowatch.com/22-facts-about-plastic-pollution-and-10-things-we-can-do-about-it-1881885971.html>.

The production, use, and disposal of plastic releases greenhouse gases. To learn more about the massive challenges posed by plastic, and learn the truth behind some common misconceptions that you might share, we recommend the documentary film, “The Story of Plastic.”

Other Tips for Reducing Plastic...

*It's not easy to make new products from many types of plastic and a lot of plastic can't be recycled at all. Therefore, it's best to avoid purchasing plastic items.

*None of us can avoid plastic altogether, so be sure to recycle all you can. In Bronxville that includes anything with a 1-7 in a triangle on the bottom.

*Moisturizer, shampoo—it's hard to get such bottles clean enough to recycle them. Here's how you can do it: fill a bowl with water, squeeze the bottle to draw in the water, shake the bottle and squeeze out the water into the sink. Repeat several times until the water stream runs clear.

*You might consider using beeswax covers instead of plastic wrap and aluminum foil to cover dishes of leftovers. If you do use foil, it can be washed and reused. Plastic wrap can be placed for recycling in special bins for thin plastic at large retail stores, including grocery stores.

*Use refillable water bottles instead of buying water in plastic bottles. This image might inspire you to make the switch. Imagine one-fourth of the plastic bottle filled with fuel oil; according to some sources, that's about the amount of fossil fuel required to produce that bottle of water (<https://mightynest.com/articles/making-a-plastic-water-bottle>).

*Instead of automatically reaching for the roll of plastic bags in the produce section of the grocery store, why not bring your own reusable cloth produce bags?

*Worried about plastic chemicals leaching from containers into your food? Switch to glass and stainless steel.

*Carrying out food from restaurants results in loads of trash. Urge managers to choose environmentally friendly packaging; reuse and recycle what you can. Consider asking if you can provide your own reusable containers.

*Bring your own coffee mug to Slave of the Grind and Starbucks.

*Biodegradable plastic bags are not friendly to the environment. They break down into micro-pieces of plastic that can now be found almost anywhere on the planet. Compostable bags, made of organic material such as sugar cane, break down in ways that are better for the environment.

*Don't forget you can recycle thin plastic grocery bags, dry cleaning bags, newspaper sleeves, and more at grocery stores such as Acme. Look for the bin outside the store. For details on other kinds of plastic you can recycle there: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/50042.html>

*When you make purchases, give extra consideration to items made with glass, metal, and other long-lasting material. Think about packaging too—can you avoid plastic by choosing a different brand?

*We're all obligated to put our garbage in plastic trash bags. Let's start looking for an alternative!

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