



IMPACTS OF BLACK PLASTIC ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC HEALTH

<https://cleanwater.org/campaign/rethink-disposable>



WHAT IS BLACK PLASTIC?

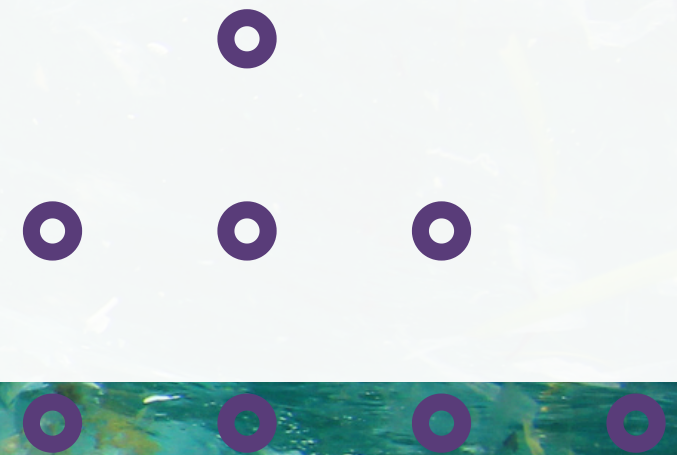
Black plastic is any plastic that is black in color and is made by adding carbon black pigment to the plastic.



WHY IS BLACK PLASTIC A PROBLEM?



- Cannot be recycled
- Can contain recycled electronic waste
- Can contain chemicals like styrene, flame retardants, or phthalates
- Leaches chemicals into the food we eat





WHY CAN'T BLACK PLASTIC BE RECYCLED?

At most recycling centers, recyclable goods are separated and sorted using infrared cameras on a conveyor belt. An infrared camera detects the amount of light each item reflects and sorts recyclables appropriately.

The pigment in black plastics absorbs light instead of reflecting it. As a result, black plastic items end up in the pile of non-recyclable materials that are sent to a landfill or incinerator instead.



WHAT IS IN BLACK PLASTIC?



Styrene is listed as "reasonably anticipated to be a human carcinogen" by the US Department of Health and Human Services. Small amounts of styrene can leach from polystyrene plastic containers into food, particularly when heated.

Black plastic made of E-waste often contains flame-retardant chemicals, which are added to make electronics less flammable. These chemicals can persist in black plastic and potentially leach out of the products they're used in, especially when heated.



Polystyrene doesn't biodegrade, and when it sits in landfills the plastic can become brittle, breaking down into microplastics that leach into water, which then contaminates drinking water and exposes marine animal



40% of black plastics contain heavy metals such as cadmium, mercury, and lead. These metals, as well as phthalates and flame retardants, are known carcinogens that can also cause serious developmental and reproductive damage, even at low levels.

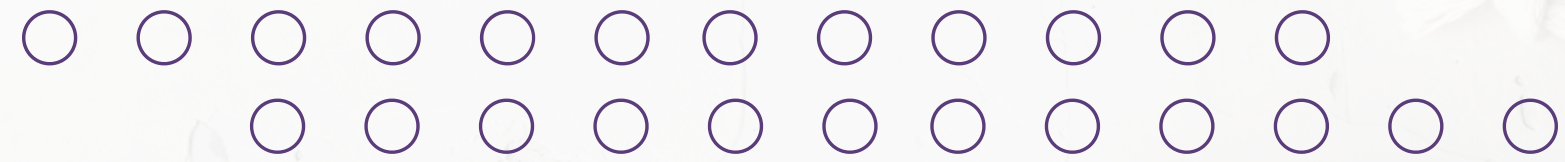


HUMAN HEALTH CONCERNS



- Microplastics have been found in various parts of the human body, including the blood, lungs, liver, kidneys, brain, testes, and even breast milk and placenta
- We consume on average a credit card's size worth of plastic each week
- Researchers found that brain samples contained roughly 10 times more microplastics than other organs like the liver and kidneys. The amount of plastic found in the average brain sample is equivalent to a plastic spoon.

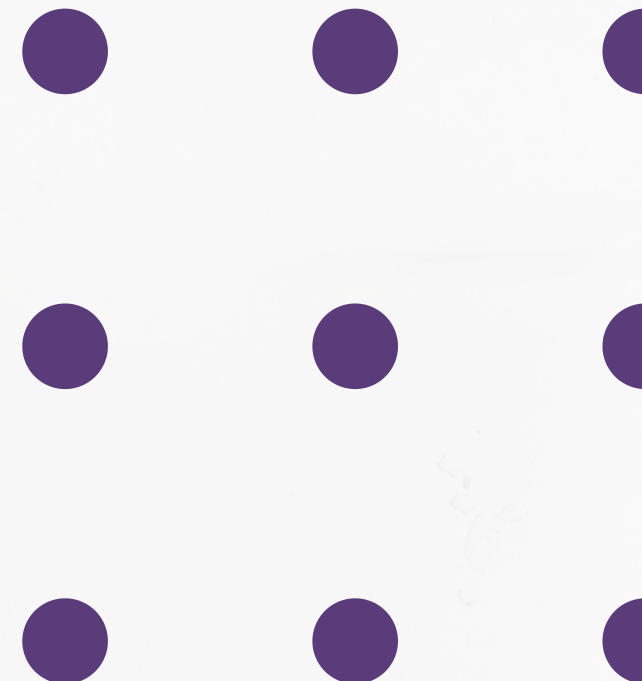




THE ONLY SOLUTION IS TO STOP USING BLACK PLASTIC

Connecticut is spending \$94 million a year to ship waste out of state. Since black plastic cannot be recycled, it contaminates recycling streams and contributes to unnecessary material waste in our trash.

CT has introduced legislation, HB 6229, aimed at reducing single-use plastics and polystyrene waste. This bill, if passed, will ban the sale, use, purchase, and provision of certain polystyrene foodware and packaging products, as well as single-use plastic straws, stirrers, and sticks by businesses, state and municipal agencies, schools, and food vendors.





THANK YOU!

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