

There are many reasons why plastics are bad for Earth. Thousands of manmade items are made from plastic. Many of them are like water bottles that we use only once. We don't need to use many of these products



1. Pollution-creating oil must be drilled and refined to be used in plastics. The process of making plastics in factories often causes major pollution problems that fill the air and water with toxic chemicals. Also, factories often leak plastic pellets into waterways. Help stop the building of more factories that produce plastic by <u>clicking here</u>.



2. Hundreds of species of animals call waterways their home. Single-use plastic bags, straws, bottles, plate utensils, and more float, blow, and spill into oceans, lakes, wetlands, and rivers creating dangerous pollution for these water creatures. Sea animals often get tangled in plastics or plastic fishing nets that are left by commercial fishing boats. Beaches and waters become covered with plastic pollution. Learn more at NRDC.



3. Plastic doesn't compost or dissolve in water. It remains for hundreds of years. Often large pieces of plastic break apart and fill the waters with tiny pieces call microplastics that water animals eat and become sick or die. Check out the <u>National Ocean Service</u> to learn more. Read about the Great Garbage patch on the next page.

## Are We plastic people,

No! We don't need to be. Our lives are filled with plastic for too many uses that we don't really need. There are other Earth-safe ways to live. Start with limiting plastic straws or bottles.





## What is the Geat Garbage Patch?

In the middle of the Pacific Ocean, halfway between Hawaii and San Francisco, there is a floating trash area that is thought to cover nearly 8% of the Pacific. Trash comes together in this area because of a giant circular ocean current that pulls in the trash we have dumped into our oceans. This type of current is called a gyre (pronounced  $\underline{j}\underline{i}$ -er). There are several more "gyre" areas in the ocean. As the plastic breaks up, most of the trash areas become tiny pieces of plastic that are very difficult to clean out of the oceans. The sea creatures think that the plastic is food and that they can eat it.

This swirling mass of trash consists of mostly plastic items. It's trash from fishing expeditions, beach picnic supplies, toothbrushes, plastic shopping bags, water bottles, <u>straws</u>, fishing nets, and much more. If we absolutely need them then we must depose of them carefully and recycle when possible.

Imagine how sick the birds and sea creatures are because of us using one-time-use plastic items when we don't have to use them. Plastic bags from our shopping expeditions aren't needed. We can use <u>reusable bags</u>. Straws from our malts or beverages aren't needed. **Bottled water** should only be used in emergencies.

The <u>Great Garbage Patch</u> is the biggest out of 5 patches found in our oceans. They are all over the world. Is it worth it to use so many plastics? Let's stop being plastic people!

What can you do to stop plastic trash?

Make a list of plastics that you and your family will stop using. List what you will use instead. Send a copy to KSE and then you can put it on your "fridge."

Make a video clip about how concerned you are about the Great Garbage Patch. Tell people how to stop being a plastic person. <u>Email video to KSE</u> to put on our website. Send your video to the local TV stations.



happened

to my beautiful ocean home?