



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, December 31, 2023

Reducing Plastic Use Still a Good New Year's Resolution

Here are some reasons and some actions to take.

Plastic pellets are deadly.

"Small pieces of plastic are ending up in our waterways and causing big problems for wildlife. To a fish or a turtle, plastic pellets can easily look like a yummy snack. But when animals consume this fraudulent feast, the plastic can't be digested like food and can cause that animal to starve....

These plastic pellets are called 'nurdles.' They're about the size of a lentil bean, and they're the building blocks for just about every plastic product you use. Because nurdles are so small, they often spill out into waterways and storm drains when they're being manufactured or transported. From there, nurdles find their way into our rivers, lakes, and oceans -- and the bellies of animals." [Tell your senators to support the Plastic Pellet Free Waters Act and protect wildlife from microplastic pollution today.](#) (*Environmental Action*, 12/12/23)

Amending legislation to Philadelphia's plastic bag ban.

"Philadelphia City Council overwhelmingly passed legislation on [12/14] to motivate greater use of reusable bags among shoppers and assure the success of Philadelphia's Plastic Bag Ban.

The amending legislation to the plastic bag ban **would require all retailers to collect a 15-cent fee on paper bags which they would keep to cover the cost of the bag.** Economists report that charging minimum fees serves as a disincentive, encouraging customers to either skip the bag or choose reusable bags. The results around the country have been dramatic.... demonstrating that when fees are combined with bans, they can result in achieving a greater reduction of all single-use bags within just the first year of being in effect....

[Help Philadelphia further increase the use of reusable bags by telling Mayor Kenney to sign the bill into law.](#) Oh and don't forget to take your reusable bags with you when you go to shop!" (Maurice Sampson, Eastern Pennsylvania Director, *Clean Water Action*, 12/18/23)

Don't be fooled by the term "chemical recycling."

"Chemical recycling is being pushed by industry groups as the solution to plastic waste. But in reality, all it does is break down plastic into oil and gas to eventually be burned.... Burning plastic as part of the chemical recycling process can release 96 different types of dangerous air pollutants and hazardous solid and toxic waste, including some known carcinogens....

Chemical recycling doesn't work. Instead, it's just a new way to burn fossil fuels, generating vast amounts of greenhouse gas emissions and toxic waste -- all while allowing the plastics industry to keep making more and more plastic.... **The best way to reduce plastic pollution is to reduce our use of plastic products, especially those wasteful single-use items we just don't need.**" (*U.S. PIRG* [Public Interest Research Groups], 11/2/23)

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at socialjustice@holycrossphl.org.