



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

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, October 27, 2024

### *Trick or Treat: Let's Not Fall Prey to the Tricks*

“Witches, goblins, and ghosts used to be the scariest things about Halloween but now there's also the mounds of plastic waste that usually accompany the holiday. Fortunately, we've got all the tricks and treats you need to make your Halloween celebrations fun and spooky without contributing to the avalanche of single-use plastic pollution this fall.” (Judith Enck, *BeyondPlastics.org*, 10/3/24)

**Here are some plastic-free Halloween tips from [BeyondPlastics.org](https://www.beyondplastics.org).**

**Try to avoid buying new costumes** in one of those desperate last-minute trips to the seasonal Halloween Stores that pop up like mushrooms in October because they are cheaply made and are almost always made entirely from plastic. Visit a thrift store or create your own.

**Choose plastic-free decorations.** Do your best to steer clear of single-use and cheap plastic items that are likely to end up in the trash after a single use. Fortunately, nature makes a gorgeous line of non-toxic, fully compostable Halloween decorations in the form of pumpkins and other decorative gourds along with hay bales, reeds, and ornamental corn.

**Make your own scarecrows.** Dig through your ragbag to find some old clothes, buy a bale of hay, stuff the clothes with hay, and top with a pumpkin head or a burlap or paper grocery bag on which you've drawn a funny face.

**Choose LEDs.** If you want to light your house up at night beyond the jack-o-lanterns, make sure you purchase LED string lights as they use significantly less energy (hence lower carbon emissions) and will also last longer than incandescent bulbs will.

**Buy candy in bulk** and create individual goodie bags or **pick plastic-free packages.** There are some candy options that come wrapped in foil or small thin cardboard boxes.

**And what about that supposedly recyclable plastic? Is it really recycled?**

“The amount of plastic waste being produced has doubled since 2000 with **only 5% of that plastic getting recycled**.... Items that aren't being recycled getting mixed in with the stuff that is being recycled can send entire dump trucks of plastic to the landfill.... That means more plastic in our environment, more oil being extracted and burned to make new plastic, and more microplastic pollution from plastic decaying in landfills or burning in the incinerator.

That triple threat can destroy wildlife ecosystems and lead to animals getting sick, or even dying. We need to hold plastic producers accountable for telling us the truth. [Insist on truth in recycling by sending a message to the Federal Trade Commission today.](#)” (*Environmental Action*, 10/12/24)

Comments on this column may be directed to the Social Justice Committee at [socialjustice@holycrossphl.org](mailto:socialjustice@holycrossphl.org).  
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