

## PLASTIC....NOT SO FANTASTIC AFTER ALL.

**Conventional plastics can pollute the environment and leach harmful chemicals. How much unnecessary plastic waste do YOU generate? It's time to seriously look at how YOU can reduce your plastic usage NOW!**

When plastic manufacturing took off in the early 20th century, plastic was heralded as a miraculous material—lightweight, flexible, and sturdy.



Eventually, though, plastic's down sides started to emerge: Toxic chemicals such as benzene and dioxin are released into surrounding communities during the manufacture of certain plastic polymers. Worse still, some types leach chemicals continuously as we use them.



The plastic bag is an icon of convenience culture, by some estimates the single most ubiquitous consumer item on Earth, numbering in the trillions.

They're made from petroleum or natural gas with all the attendant environmental impacts of harvesting fossil fuels. One recent study found that the inks and colorants used on some bags contain lead, a toxin.



Every year, Americans throw away some 100 billion of them.

Only 1 percent of plastic bags are recycled worldwide.... and the rest, when discarded, can persist for centuries. They can spend eternity in landfills.



In the Northern Pacific Gyre, a great vortex of ocean currents, there's now a swirling mass of plastic trash about 1,000 miles off the coast of California, which spans an area that's twice the size of Texas, including fragments of plastic bags.



According to the Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation, more than a million birds and 100,000 marine mammals and sea turtles die every year from eating or getting entangled in plastic.

The conservation group estimates that 50 percent of all marine litter is some form of plastic. There are 46,000 pieces of plastic litter floating in every square mile of ocean, according to the United Nations Environment Programme.

By reducing your use of plastic, choosing plastic products carefully, and using them safely, you can reduce the risks that plastics pose to the Earth and your family's health.



*"The leatherback turtle can keep itself warm in cold water, dive over 1000 meters below sea level, travel thousands of miles and gulp down a Portuguese man-of-war but is threatened by the inert plastic shopping bag" -*

Mrosovsky, N. 1987

