THE STORY OF PLASTIC
The Story of Plastic looks at the man-made crisis of plastic pollution and the worldwide effect it has on the health of our planet and the people who inhabit it.

From production - through use - and on to disposal, every step of the plastic life cycle creates pollution. We are buying "convenience" at great expense to the health of our planet, and our people.
Impact of plastics

- Worldwide shoppers use 500 billion single-use bags
- It’s estimated by 2050 that there will be more plastic in the ocean than fish
- Plastic trash breaks down to microplastics and can be found everywhere and in everything from food, water, air, soil, animals to humans
- In marine life, disrupts digestive tract; dead whale found to have 88lbs of plastic in stomach
Plastics cause problems from production to disposal and these problems demand solutions at every level: international, national, local and personal.
The heroes featured in The Story of Plastic are working on the problem across all fronts, from petrochemicals, to ocean pollution, to zero waste.

Do you identify with any of the heroes? How so?

Which potential solutions do you think you can engage with?
International Solutions
Standing up to corporations and holding them accountable for disposal

https://www.breakfreefromplastic.org/campaigns/corporatecampaigining

Sign the petition - and take a selfie with a wrapper, use hashtags to spread the word on social media

Check out the break free from plastic site for many more corporate campaigns
There are many international policy campaigns on the break free from plastic site.

Start with the legislative toolkit.
Sign the petition to tell Congress to pass the Break Free from Plastic Pollution Act

- Phase-out certain unnecessary single-use plastics
- Establish a nationwide beverage container refund program
- Establish minimum recycled content requirements for plastic beverage containers
- Shift the burden of plastic waste from consumers to the companies producing it
- Require the EPA to establish standards for recycling and composting labels
- Pause the permitting of new plastic manufacturing facilities so the impacts on the environment and communities can be evaluated and safer measures established
Ban was to be in place July 1, 2020
The ban was blocked when a powerful state senator quietly inserted language in a budget related bill that would prevent Pennsylvania from regulating single use plastic bags.
Only Narberth Boro and City of Philadelphia enacted proposed ordinances – implementation now delayed
The studies were required by amendment to the Fiscal Code in 2019

- 3 billion single-use plastic bags used in PA annually
- 2560 municipalities surveyed:
  - 69% said bans/fees should be enacted at the state level
  - 39% felt bans/fees effective way to minimize harmful environmental impacts
- Demand for bags falls:
  - with ban (1.6 billion – 34%); with fee (1.8 billion – 40%); ban plus fee (2.5 billion bags, 54%)
- Can increase cost of goods
- Possible loss of jobs and earnings
Rep. John Hershey (R-Juniata County) enacted legislation that prohibits bans or fees until COVID-19 emergency is ended. He represents a district with major manufacturer of plastics and he’s working on bill to extend prohibition indefinitely.

Philadelphia considering suing based on “single subject rule” – illegal insertion provision.
PA: Zero Waste Campaign

Take action with Penn Environment’s Zero Waste Campaign and tell our governor and lawmakers to ban plastic foam take-out cups and containers.
A Local “Solution” (that impacts the world): Recycling - types of plastic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recycle #</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Used for</th>
<th>Likelihood of being recycled into new products</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>PET</td>
<td>Bottles, food containers</td>
<td>Reasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>HDPE</td>
<td>Bottles, grocery bags (w/special processing), plastic lumber</td>
<td>Reasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>PVC</td>
<td>Plastic pipe, fencing, shower curtains, toys</td>
<td>Not reasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>LDPE</td>
<td>Plastic bags, 6-pac rings, various containers</td>
<td>Not reasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Auto parts, industrial fibers, food containers, dishware, straws, some K-cups</td>
<td>Not reasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>PS</td>
<td>Coffee cup lids, clamshell containers, Styrofoam</td>
<td>Very unreasonable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Other (nylon, acrylic, etc)</td>
<td>Some K-cups</td>
<td>Not reasonable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Local “Solution” (that impacts the world):
So …where are we in recycling?

- Plastic recycling rates are horrible.
- There seems to be little uniformity as to which plastics are sorted out by various recycling plants, leading to consumer confusion.
- At low oil prices, new plastic is cheaper to produce than recycled plastic.
- Many environmentalists (e.g. Greenpeace) are claiming we were “sold a bill of goods”.
- US Congress has lots of ideas but little action: Break Free from Plastic Act, Zero Waste Act, RECYCLE Act, RECOVER Act, Plastic Waste Reduction and Recycling Act, Save Our Seas 2.0, etc.
- Prevailing mantra is: REDUCE, REUSE, REFILL
Individual Solutions
Single Use Plastics in Your Home - Kitchen

Dishwasher detergent “pods”
• The film is polyvinylalcohol film
• Completely dissolves in water
• Digested by microbes to carbon dioxide and water
• What’s in those pods?
• Environmental Working Group ratings:

https://www.ewg.org/guides/subcategories/199-DishwashingPodsPouches/

Dishwashing liquids
Consider dish soap powders that come in non-plastic packaging that you mix at home
Individual Solutions
Single Use Plastics in Your Home - Bath and Laundry

Bathroom Tissue without plastic

Fifteen brands to compare:

Another option:
https://us.whogivesacrap.org/

Laundry detergent suppliers:

www.blueland.com
www.cleancult.com
www.dropps.com

Keep microfibers from your laundry out of the waste stream

https://filtrol.net/
www.coraball.com
Individual Solutions
Local Bulk Food Shopping:

Where to shop

- Kimberton Whole Foods-Plumsteadville
- McCaffrey’s-New Hope
- Organnon’s Market-Newtown and coming soon to New Britain
- Natural Foods Store-Penndel
- Basil Bandwagon-Lambertville
- The Larder-Doylestown
Individual Solutions
Local Bulk Food Shopping:

What you’ll need

- Jars or other re-usable ware
- Reusable grocery bags and vegetable bags
- Marker, tape, reusable lids
- Time
- Patience
- Organization
Individual Solutions
Local Bulk Food Shopping:

Ideas:

- Use mason jars and make reusable lids
- Find a zero waste blog that you like
- Make snack foods from scratch
- Make it fun, keep a journal, form a club
Individual Solutions
Support local farmers

Seasonal:
- Manoff 2 Market-Solebury
- Solebury Orchards
- Wrightstown Farmer’s Market
- Milk House Farm Market-Newtown
- Yardley Farmer's Market
- Lower Makefield Farmer’s Market
- Doylestown Farmer’s Market
- Chalfont Farmer’s Market
- Plumsteadville Grange Farmer’s Market
- Perkasie Farmer’s Market

Year Round:
- None Such Farms-Buckingham
- Blue Moon Acres-Buckingham
- Maximucks Doylestown
- Shady Brook Farms Yardley
- The Market at Delaware Valley University
- Newtown Farm Market
- Tanner’s Brothers Dairy Market-Ivyland

For more info about local farm stores see the Fresh From Bucks County Farms” Guide on Penn State Cooperative Extension website under Bucks County.
Individual Solutions
More ideas

- Join a local Community Garden or...
- Grow your own vegetables at home
- Find a local Mexican Restaurant that is willing to sell you bulk chips....

Your ideas!

- (Fill in the blank)
- ____________________________
- ____________________________
- ____________________________
Thank you for acting on plastic pollution.

Stay in touch! Sign up for our Advocacy emails at www.bcas.org/about-us/advocacy-position-statements/ and read our blog series from No Plastic Nancy for more ideas and tips.