

# plasticpollutioncoalition

March 2, 2021

Dear Assembly Members,

My name is Dianna Cohen. As CEO & Co-Founder of Plastic Pollution Coalition; a growing global alliance of more than 1,200 organizations, businesses, and thought leaders in 75 countries working toward a world free of plastic pollution and its toxic impact on humans, animals, waterways, the ocean, and the environment -- I and my team are deeply concerned about the growing microplastics crisis and the innumerable challenges that microplastics pose to human, animal, and environmental health.

For decades, the producers of consumer plastic products have diverted public attention from this crisis, knowing full well the products they produced would create a downstream disposal problem that would ultimately be unsustainable and present a major environmental pollution issue. They diverted our attention by passing the responsibility for the pollution they created onto us - telling us to recycle, to not litter, and paying for efforts like beach and river cleanups. The solutions they offered, we now know, were non-solutions. Plastic cannot be effectively recycled, and the plastic that is recycled is more expensive and thus non-competitive with virgin plastics - causing much of the world's plastic pollution to be incinerated. Furthermore, these issues are compounded by single-use plastic items, which are used often for mere seconds or minutes yet will last as pollutants in our environment for hundreds of years.

What plastic producers, and the rest of us, could not anticipate is the unavoidable crisis created by the way in which plastic breaks down over time.

With the exception of the small percentage of plastics that are incinerated, all of the 7800 metric tons of plastic resins and fibers produced over the last 65 years have or will become microplastics. There are approximately between 15 to 51 trillion microscopic pieces of plastic, weighing 250,000 tons afloat in our oceans. As plastic breaks down, it penetrates every level of our food chain.

- Bottled water contains microplastic. [93% of 259 bottles](#) of drinking water showed some sign of microplastic contamination. Contamination ranged from 0 to over 10,000 microplastic particles per liter.
- [1/4 of fish](#) from California and Indonesian markets contained microplastic.
- Plastic ingestion has now been [documented for 233 marine species](#), including 100% of marine turtles, 36% of seals, 59% of whales, and 59% of seabirds, as well as [92 species of fish](#) and 6 species of invertebrates.
- Microplastics are in our [air](#) - atmospheric fallout appears to be an important source of microplastics
- Microplastic is in our [table salt](#).

With respect to human health, microplastics and the chemicals from which they are composed, have been shown to have tremendous adverse health effects on humans and animals and have

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been associated with certain cancers, certain autoimmune diseases, as well as average hormonal changes in populations worldwide. With the sheer volume of microplastics in our environment, it has become impossible to completely avoid their consumption, and it is estimated that the average person consumes a credit card worth of plastic every week.

Plastic Pollution Coalition stands with the scientific and medical professionals worldwide who continue to present the undeniable evidence of the microplastics crisis and continue to support upstream efforts to prevent further production and subsequent pollution of and by these materials.

Onward,



Dianna Cohen, CEO, Plastic Pollution Coalition



Jackie Nuñez, Founder, The Last Plastic Straw & Advocacy Program Director, Plastic Pollution Coalition

