

Simple Ideas to Reduce Plastic Waste (brought to you by Placer People of Faith Together's Plastics Action Group)

The Problem	Take Stock
<p>Although our modern lifestyle would not be possible without plastic, its excessive use is adversely affecting the environment and human health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Its durability allows it to persist in the environment, turning into microplastics • Chemicals used in processing plastic can leach out during use • Less than 10% of all the plastics ever made has actually been recycled. • Single-use plastics, in particular, make mountains of trash, release toxic gases when burned, and foul our streams and oceans. <p>For more see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Frontline: Plastic Wars (PBS video - released Mar 2020) • The Story of Plastic (The Story of Stuff Project video– released Mar 2020) • Plastic: A Toxic Love Story by Susan Freinkel (published in 2011) 	<p>Single-use plastic is a particular problem. Consider the plastic that you use once and then throw away – how much of it is necessary?</p> <p>You can get a feel for how much plastic you use by doing this exercise:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">For a period of one week (or as long as you can stand it), try saving all of the plastic that you would normally throw out.</p> <p>These are the single-use plastics that are filling our landfills.</p> <p>Consult with your family &/or co-workers – identify plastic item(s) with a sustainable substitute (or choose to do without).</p>
Start with Simple Actions	Promote Policy Change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Say no to single use plastics; replace with sustainable alternatives • Eliminate use of products with plastic containers when possible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - search for products in glass containers - make your own yoghurt, salad dressings, bread, cleaning products, etc. • Shop at your local farmer's market to avoid pre-packaged produce • Buy in bulk – avoid single-use packages of snacks, nuts, chips, etc. • Bring your own containers for restaurant take-out • request plastic-free packaging or give your business to companies that use plastic-free packaging, and then thank companies for using plastic-free packaging 	<p>Individuals cannot do it all! Apply political pressure to enact laws to get producers to take responsibility for the end of life of their products. Here are some bills worth supporting:</p> <p>California:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Single Use Packaging and Products (AB 1080/SB 54)</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Circular Economy and Plastic Pollution (AB 842)</p> <p>Federal:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Break Free from Plastic Pollution (HR 2238/ SB 984)</p>
Resources	
<p>Find a local farmer's market: National Farmer's Market Directory</p> <p>Local stores that refill soap supplies:</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Gaia Soap Supply - 104 Argall Way, Nevada City</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Rutherford Reserve & Refillery - 853 Lincoln Way, Auburn</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Village General Store & Refillery - 500 Vernon St, Roseville</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">Refill Madness - 1828 29th St, Sacramento</p> <p>On-line sources of plastic-free alternatives to household products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Package Free • Blueland • TruEarth • Ethique • Etee • Dropops • Seventh Generation Plastic Free Homecare 	<p>TerraCycle "Recycles Everything"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some programs are sponsored by corporations (free to you), others are fee-based. • Invest in a TerraCycle Zero Waste Box. Although you pay an up-front fee for the box, at least you know that TerraCycle will actually recycle or repurpose it. <p>Books:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic Free: How I Kicked the Plastic Habit and How You Can Too - Beth Terry (2015) • Zero Waste: Simple Life Hacks to Drastically Reduce Your Trash - Shia Su (2018)