

TAKE ACTION TO REDUCE PLASTIC WASTE

Learn about plastic pollution, disposal, and how to cut down on your waste!

5 FAST FACTS

1. Only 9% of plastics are recycled



2. Five trillion plastic bags are used a year.

2.

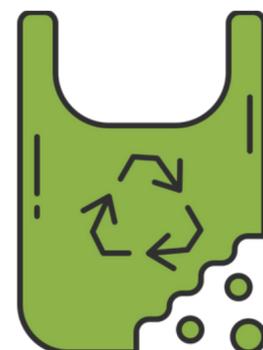
3. 79% of plastics ever made still sits in landfills or the natural environment.



4. At least 14 million tons of plastic end up in our oceans every year.

4.

5. As plastics break down, they turn into microplastics - tiny particles that contaminate soil, waterways, and even people.



RECYCLING PLASTICS

What do the numbers mean?



Resin identification codes (RICs) aim to identify the specific resins used to manufacture plastic products. This aids in the collection, disposal and recycling of plastics goods once they are disposed.



PET

Polyethylene Terephthalate



HDPE

High Density Polyethylene



PVC

Polyvinyl Chloride



LDPE

Low Density Polyethylene



PP

Polypropylene



PS

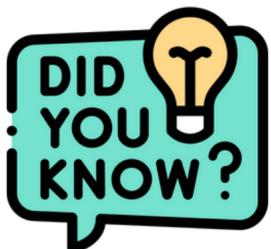
Polystyrene



Other

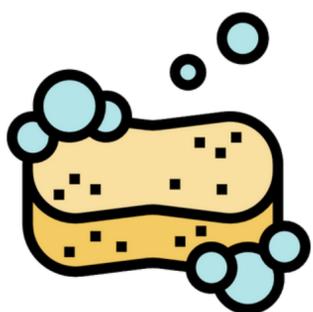
Other Mixed Plastics

Common Products



YOU SHOULD KNOW:

RICs do not indicate the recyclability or recycled content of a product. They can be useful, when used correctly, to reduce contamination in the recycling process.



To reduce contamination, be sure to clean and/or sort your plastics before adding them to the recycling bin!

Not all plastics are accepted at recycling facilities, so it is important to contact your local material recovery facility to ensure the plastics you use are accepted for recycling. Otherwise, they will be disposed in a landfill or by incineration.



IDENTIFY THE PLASTICS

Match the picture with the corresponding RICs.

A.



B.



C.



D.



Key: A. Pipes, RIC 3-Polyvinyl Chloride (PVC); B. Spray Bottle, RIC 3-PVC; Gloves, RIC 7-Nitrile-butadiene w/Plasticizers; C. Plastic Shopping Bag, RIC 4-Low Density Polyethylene; D. Water Bottle, RIC 1-Polyethylene Terephthalate; Cap, RIC-2-High Density Polypropylene and RIC 5-Polypropylene.

TIPS TO USE LESS PLASTIC

REDUCE

- Avoid excessive food and product packaging by purchasing in bulk.
- Utilize water fountains and refill stations.
- Request paper packaging.



REUSE

- Use reusable water bottles, straws and utensils.
- Bring reusable bags when shopping.
- Find creative ways to use plastic for your next DIY project!

RECYCLE

- Know what plastics are accepted at your local recycling facility.
- Ensure plastics are emptied, clean, and dry before placing in bin.
- When possible, buy recycled products!



RETHINK

- Can the item you are using be repaired rather than discarded?
- Brainstorm substitutes that can be used instead of plastics.



PLASTIC-FREE DOE

Most of the plastics we use daily are **Single-Use Plastics (SUPs)**. SUPs are intended for a single use and are typically immediately disposed. Common SUPs include water bottles, food containers, utensils, snack bags, condiment packets, plastic cups/plates, and plastic bags.

Can you name other SUPs?

LUNCHBAG CHECK:
How many SUPs can be eliminated?



WAYS TO REDUCE SINGLE-USE PLASTICS:

- Use a reusable water bottle
- Use silverware instead of plastic utensils
- Buy chips in bulk then use paper or a reusable containers
- Wrap your sandwich in paper or use a reusable container

What ways can you reduce your SUPs at home?

WHAT AND WHERE TO RECYCLE AT FORRESTAL



WHITE OFFICE PAPER

WHAT: White office paper, printed with ink, can include staples

WHERE: Blue receptacles in office suites and next to copy machines

DO NOT INCLUDE:

Paperclips, binder clips, colored post it notes, etc.

CANS, BOTTLES, AND OTHER PAPER PRODUCTS

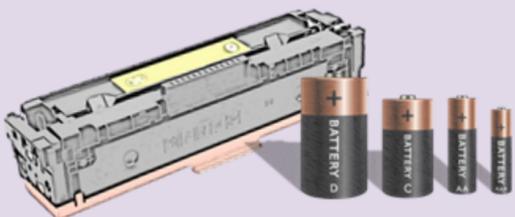


WHAT: Newspaper, glass bottles, plastic bottles, aluminum cans, and steel cans

WHERE: Receptacles at or adjacent to elevator banks

Contact the Facilities Management Helpdesk at (202) 586-6100 or FORFacOpsHelpdesk@hq.doe.gov for mixed and colored paper, paperboard, file folders, and corrugated cardboard recycling.

BATTERIES AND USED TONER CARTRIDGES



Battery and used toner recycling containers are located at the Forrestal Supply Store (GL-084). Used toner cartridges may also be sent via inter-office mail.