

HOW LONG Until It's Gone?



Plastic Coated Paper
3 Months



Balloons
6 Months



Milk Carton
5 Years



Plastic Bags
10-20 Years



Styrofoam
50 Years



Rubber Boot Sole
50-80 Years



Beverage Holder
400 Years



Disposable Diapers
450 Years



Plastic Bottles
450 Years

Source: raneps.net • stohet.gov • NOAA.gov • biogreenpackagingstore.com



FACTS AND FIGURES

- 80% of anthropogenic litter along the shorelines of the Great Lakes is comprised of plastics. (Alliance for the Great Lakes, 2013)
- The estimated cost to combat and curtail plastic debris pollution in the Great Lakes is over \$400 million annually. (Driedger et al., 2015)
- In 2012, the monetary value of the hours spent by volunteers cleaning up beaches around the Great Lakes represented over US \$250,000. (Alliance for the Great Lakes, 2013)
- Lake Erie's surface water alone contains 46,000 plastic particles per square kilometer. (Eriksen et al., 2013a)



PLASTICS AND OUR WATER



CLEAN WATER STARTS WITH YOU!

**LAKE COUNTY
STORMWATER MANAGEMENT
DEPARTMENT**

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Learn about the plastic pollution in our waterways, what it means to us and what we can do to prevent it in the future.

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND, IN OUR BODIES

Plastic does not disappear, it just gets smaller. Every pair of shoes, plastic water bottles, synthetic clothing, every plastic object that is tossed into the trash or to the sides of the road will remain in our ecosystem indefinitely. 94% of tap water in the United States contains these microplastics.

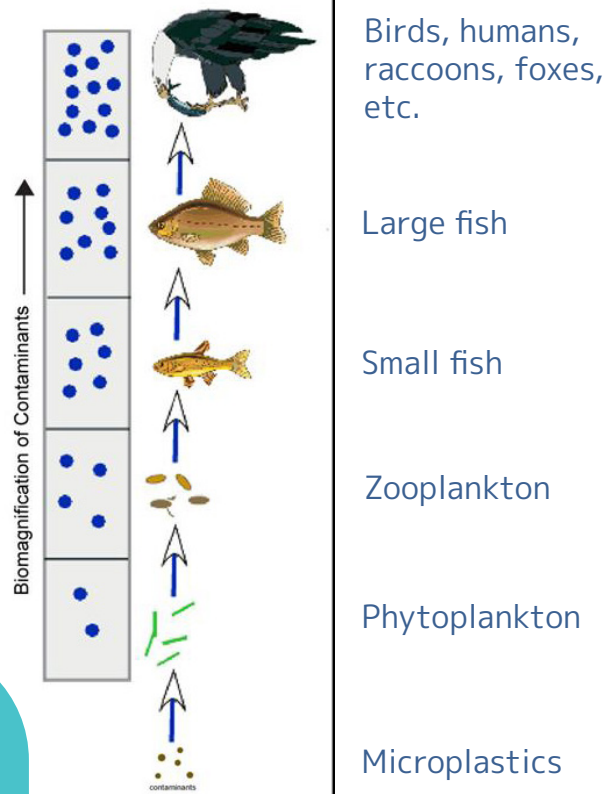


DID YOU KNOW?
Every straw you've ever used is still on the planet today.

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS?

Lake Erie is known as the "Walleye capital of the world," but many of the sport-fish caught in the Great Lakes have high levels of plastics in their bodies due to bioaccumulation. Bioaccumulation is the accumulation of substances within an organism.

Aquatic Food Chain



- ## SIMPLE SWITCHES
- Plastic water bottles: reusable metal water bottles.
 - Plastic bags: paper or reusable bags made from recycled material.
 - Plastic straws: metal, paper, or no straw at all.
 - Food storage containers: glass or stainless steel, reuse take-out containers.
 - Chemical household cleaners: vinegar and water mix with lemon for a fresh scent.