

## Here are Some Facts About Plastic Pollution From Surfrider Foundation:

<https://www.surfrider.org/programs/plastic-pollution>)

- 1) 50% of the plastic we use, we use just once, and throw away.
- 2) We currently recover only 5% of plastics we produce.
- 3) Annually approximately 500 billion plastic bags are used worldwide. More than one million bags are used every minute.
- 4) It takes 500-1,000 years for plastic to degrade.
- 5) Billions of pounds of plastic can be found in swirling convergences in the oceans making up about 40 percent of the world's ocean surfaces. 80 percent of pollution enters the ocean from the land.
- 6) Plastic constitutes approximately 90 percent of all trash floating on the ocean's surface, with 46,000 pieces of plastic per square mile.
- 7) One million **sea birds** and 100,000 marine mammals are killed annually from plastic in our oceans.
- 8) 44 percent of all seabird species, 22 percent of cetaceans, all sea turtle species and a growing list of fish species have been documented with plastic in or around their bodies.
- 9) Virtually every piece of plastic that was ever made still exists in some shape or form (with the exception of the small amount that has been incinerated).
- 10) Plastic chemicals can be absorbed by the body—**93 percent of Americans age six or older test positive for BPA** (a plastic chemical).
- 11) Some of these compounds found in plastic have been found to alter hormones or have other potential human health effects.

**Here are 10 Ways to “Rise Above Plastic:**

- 1) Choose to reuse when it comes to shopping bags and bottled water.
- 2) Refuse single-serving packaging, excess packaging, straws and other "disposable" plastics. Carry reusable utensils in your purse, backpack or car.
- 3) Reduce everyday use of plastics such as sandwich bags and juice cartons. Replace with reusable lunch bag & cup.
- 4) Bring your to-go mug with you to the coffee shop, smoothie shop or restaurants that let you use them.
- 5) Go digital! No need for plastic cds, dvds and jewel cases when you can buy your music and videos online.
- 6) Seek out alternatives to plastic items that you rely on.
- 7) Recycle. If you must use plastic, try to choose #1 (PETE) or #2 (HDPE). Avoid plastic bags and polystyrene foam as they have very low recycling rates.
- 8) Volunteer at a beach / public places cleanup.
- 9) Support plastic bag bans, polystyrene foam bans and bottle recycling bills.
- 10) Spread the word. Talk to your family and friends about why it is important to reduce plastic in our lives and the nasty impacts of plastic pollution.