

Mother Earth is asking us for help!

Eliminating Plastic Shopping Bags



What's the Issue?

- The presence of thin plastic shopping bags is destroying Mother Earth.
- To sea turtles the plastic shopping bag looks like a jellyfish and so they try to eat it.
- Birds often mistake shredded plastic bags for food, filling their stomachs with **toxic** debris.
- No doubt you have seen or heard about the GREAT PACIFIC GARBAGE PATCH which was discovered by a researcher, Charles Moore, where plastic waste has accumulated.
- How did we get in this situation? Where did these plastic bags come from?
 - It all began in 1933 when polyethylene was created by accident in Northwick, England. The British used it secretly during World War II.
 - In 1965, a Swedish company called Celloplast patented the one piece plastic shopping bag which replaced cloth and plastic in Europe. It didn't take long for it to be introduced into the US in 1979. Two supermarket chains—Safeway and Kroger—switched to plastic bags in 1982 and the rest is history.

Acting on our Corporate Stand, What Can We Do to Help?

- Advocate for eliminating thin plastic bags.
- Can this really be done?
 - The first country to implement a ban on thin plastic bags was Bangladesh in 2002 because the bags clogged the drainage systems during flood times.
 - In Africa, Kenya banned them and more than two dozen other countries have also reduced their use by banning them or creating fines if they are used.
 - What are we in the U.S. doing to ban the use of the plastic shopping bag?
 -  The states of **California**, **New York**, and **Hawaii** have banned disposable bags. Many others are considering putting on a ban or placing a fee on their use.
 -  Look at the stores where you shop for food, clothing, etc. Are they doing anything to eliminate them? Why not ask them?
- What can we do personally to eliminate the use of plastic shopping bags and other plastics that do not disintegrate?
 - Take reusable shopping bags with you to the store so you don't bring home a thin plastic bag.
 - Take any thin plastic bags you have back to the supermarket to be recycled appropriately.
 - Each month one of the members of the Directive 4-Care for Creation Committee has posted an information sheet on plastics and how they are harmful to the Earth. No doubt you look at the number on whatever plastic you have used to see if it can be reused or recycled and then trash the rest. This is not enough!
 - We have to begin using replacements for plastics. How about sending us your suggestions and looking at the many suggestions that have been given each month on plastic?

The Great Pacific Garbage Patch: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bMncyN_C-pQ

The Origin of the Plastic Shopping Bag. <https://terngoods.com/blogs/learn/history-of-plastic-bags-how-and-why-they-are-everywhere>