

**KIPRESENTS****PRESENTS**

The 4th Annual Hanukkah Sustainability Film Screening

## **Inside the Garbage of Our World: The Ugly Truth About Plastic Pollution**

A Documentary by Philippe & Maxine Carillo

Without question the rabbinic conception of *Bal Tashchit*, the mitzvah of preventing unnecessary destruction of our world, is emerging as perhaps the spiritual imperative of our time. We have created and wholeheartedly support a culture of convenience and of overconsumption that is inherently unsustainable. We habitually take the easy way (the disposable bag, the plastic cup) despite the cost to us and to the planet. And every time we choose that disposable item, it ensures that another one will be made to take its place. We must demand that producers change how our products are designed and made, and we must have the conviction to change what we buy, even when it's inconvenient.



**"The greatest threat to our planet is the belief  
that someone else will save it." Robert Swan**



If you do only two things to reduce plastic pollution...

## 1. Drink Tap Water

Did you know that tap water in the United States is required to undergo more testing and meet more rigorous quality standards than bottled water? As a result, scientific testing done by the NRDC showed that **bottled water is no safer than tap water**. In fact, approximately 50% of bottled waters ARE tap water.

Moreover:

- It takes more than 3 liters of water to produce 1 liter of bottled water.
- The production of plastic water bottles uses 17 billion barrels of oil per year.
- In California, bottled water costs 560 times more than tap water.
- There are 50 billion bottles of water consumed every year, most of them in the United States.
- Only about one out of every six water bottles is recycled.
- Last year's International Coastal Cleanup Day netted nearly 1 million plastic water bottles on beaches and inland waterways.

Convinced? **Invest in reusable glass or stainless steel water bottles and take them with you wherever you go.** Need a refill? **Download the WeTap app to locate working drinking fountains, dog bowls and bottle fill stations.**

Watch "The Story of Bottled Water" at [storyofstuff.org](http://storyofstuff.org)

## 2. Ban the Bag

Are you still taking single-use plastic bags? It's time to stop and here's why:

- Over 1 trillion plastic bags are used every year worldwide; that's about 2 million bags used every minute.
- Americans use and throw away 100 billion plastic shopping bags every year.
- Plastic bags can take as much as 500 years to degrade and they release toxic chemicals in the process.
- It takes 12 million barrels of oil to produce the number of bags used by the US each year.
- Plastic shopping bags are used, on average, for a total of 12 minutes.
- Each plastic bag costs 2-5 cents to make and 17 cents to clean up.
- Only about 1% of plastic bags are recycled. The rest are sitting in landfills or polluting our land and water where wildlife mistake them for food.

**Refuse plastic shopping bags wherever you go.** Keep reusable shopping bags in your purse, car, and office. Chico sells bags made from recycled water bottles. Other good options are made by Baggu and RuMe.



# Ready to do more?

## Don't Litter

**Always dispose of your trash in an appropriate receptacle.**

No matter where you litter, that trash often ends up in our storm drains, which lead to the ocean. Even on a dry day, tens of millions of gallons of dirty water dump into the ocean from the city's storm drain system. And be especially careful with your trash at the beach, as it can often blow out of trash cans and onto the beach.



## Recycle

**When you need to use plastic, be sure that you recycle it once it's no longer useful.** Every piece of plastic you recycle is one piece that won't end up in the oceans. Simply recycling plastics is not enough, but it is essential. Keep in mind that plastics labeled with a 1 or 2 are most easily recycled and converted into other products. Higher numbers are more difficult, so check how recyclable a package is before buying it.

## Clean the Beach

There are a number of organizations that regularly hold beach clean-ups, and many of those will arrange a beach clean-up for private groups. Try Heal the Bay, Surfrider, LA Waterkeeper, SaveOurBeach.org, and LA Works. **Of course, you're free to clean trash off the beach any time you want!** There are also opportunities to clean the LA River with Friends of the Los Angeles River (folar.org).

Every September, more than half a million volunteers in 91 countries clean tens of millions of pounds of trash from the world's beaches and inland waterways as part of **International Coastal Cleanup Day**. In Los Angeles County, 10,000 volunteers gather at 50 sites along the coast. Over the last two decades, volunteers have picked up more than 1 million pounds of trash at LA County beaches.

Ocean Conservancy publishes a report each year detailing exactly what was found. **Among the top ten most frequently found items in 2014, eight are made of plastic:** cigarette butts (yes, the filters contain plastic), food/candy wrappers, plastic beverage bottles, plastic bottle caps, plastic straws, plastic bags, plastic grocery bags, and plastic plates and cups. (The other two are single-use beverage containers made of glass or aluminum.) For more information, go to [oceanconservancy.org](http://oceanconservancy.org).



# On the Go



Always carry a refillable bottle or mug with you. Refuse disposable cups wherever possible and **don't buy any beverages in plastic bottles**. Make it yourself or choose tap water!

**Keep reusable or biodegradable utensils in your car or office for eating on the move.**



**Decline plastic lids and straws.** If you love drinking from a straw, there are many reusable straws on the market in metal, glass, bamboo and silicone. While silicone is a plastic product, it is long-lasting, so it's still better than using disposable straws.

**Always say "No" to styrofoam.**



**Keep snacks** in your car, office or locker so you won't be forced to buy packaged convenience foods.

When getting takeout, you can always ask them to package your food in something other than plastic or styrofoam. And always **refuse the plastic bag and utensil packs**.



**Ask your favorite restaurant to use compostable takeout cups and containers.**



**Always forgo the disposable foam sandals at nail salons.**

Keep flip flops in your car for last-minute pedicures. If you forget them, park close and walk to your car barefoot afterward.

When traveling on airplanes, always **bring your own headphones** so you won't have to buy headphones from the airline that you don't intend to reuse.





# In the Kitchen



**Store food in lidded reusable containers**, preferably glass or stainless steel.

**Refrain from using plastic wrap.** If you need to cover a bowl or dish, try reusable silicone stretch lids, reusable silicone suction lids, Abeego Flats, or elastic bowl covers made of fabric.



**Save glass jars, coffee cans and other packaging** that can be reused for storage of food or other items.

**Never buy plastic bags** (Ziplocs, Baggies, etc). Store things in reusable containers instead. And if you truly do need a plastic bag for something, you can probably reuse one you already have, such as a bread bag.



**Avoid using paper towels** because they tend to come double-wrapped in plastic. Use washable rags instead, or try Twist Euro Sponge Cloths.

**Don't use kitchen sponges.** Rather, use washable rags for wiping down tables and counters and use Skoy Scrubs, Twist Scrub Sponges or copper/steel scouring pads for scrubbing.



When choosing utensils and other kitchen supplies, **look for wood, stainless steel and glass options.** Avoid plastics.

**Stop buying bottled water.** Drink your unfiltered tap water or consider installing a filtered water tap if your entire plumbing system is not already filtered. Alternatively, Brita makes a range of less expensive options to filter your water. There are even taps you can install by Everpure that dispense carbonated water.



**Don't buy cooking or baking sprays**, which are packaged in cans with plastic tops and caps. To reduce waste, fill a reusable spray bottle with your favorite oil. Misto and others make special oil misters, but any sprayer with a light setting will work. For baking, you can lightly butter and flour your pan. Ask yourself, "What would Grandma do?"



# At the Market



**Eschew single serve packaging.** It's better to buy a large package and repackage the contents in your own reusable containers.

**Don't use produce bags.** Instead, you can put the produce loose in your cart or use one of your reusable shopping bags to hold it. The checker will take it out of the bag to weigh it. If you prefer, there are a number of reusable produce bags on the market as well.



**Avoid produce and baked goods served in plastic "clamshell" containers.** Farmer's market vendors typically do not use clamshells to package their produce, so it's better to buy those products at a local farmer's market.

**When you have a choice** between plastic packaging and a **cardboard box, aluminum/tin/steel can or glass jar**, environmentally-speaking you should always choose the latter.



Whenever possible, **buy from bulk bins** rather than buying pre-packaged food. Bring your own containers from home. Small cotton produce bags work well.

**Avoid frozen foods** as they are almost always packaged in plastic. Even if the item comes in a box, that box usually has a plastic coating on the inside.

## Fake grass...It's **PLASTIC!**

Part of living sustainably is making choices that support a thriving ecosystem. A thriving ecosystem requires healthy soil, which is enriched by mulched native and climate-appropriate plants, and which is home to earthworms, moles, grubs, centipedes, millipedes, snails, slugs, beetles, ants, fungi, insect larvae, and many other organisms. Soil beneath plastic cannot support any of these things. What's more, the soil beneath artificial grass becomes very compacted and fails to absorb water during periods of precipitation, impacting our watershed and causing runoff that pollutes our beaches and rivers. **You can sustainably reduce your water use by choosing real plants appropriate to our climate.**





**Refuse beverages in single-use plastics.** No matter what the beverage, there is either a substitute available for free (e.g., water fountains) or you could make it at home and bring it in your own reusable bottle (e.g., iced-tea, fruit juice, smoothies, sodas, carbonated water). Even Gatorade (and other electrolyte drinks) can be made at home using the powdered mix, which is sold in a fully recyclable package.

**Choose concentrated products.** Whether it's frozen orange juice, soup or cleaning products, concentrated products allow for more product per packaging, and hence, less packaging waste.



**Don't buy anything sold in a pouch,** such as Capri Sun or Crushers. That packaging is extremely difficult to recycle and is not recyclable in Los Angeles.

**Avoid buying anything sold in aseptic cartons** (juice boxes), such as beverages, soups and gravies. They're comprised of multiple layers of paper, foil and plastic and are very difficult to recycle.



**Buy meat from the butcher wrapped in paper** rather than meat that's pre-packaged in styrofoam and plastic wrap. Butcher paper is treated with a thin layer of wax or oil so it cannot be recycled, but it is fully biodegradable in the landfill.

**Buy your butter or margarine in paper-wrapped sticks** rather than plastic tubs.



Don't buy cheese in excessive plastic packaging. **Buy blocks of cheese that you can slice, shred or grate at home.**

Did you know that chewing gum  
is made of **PLASTIC**?

It's true. And gross. The first chewing gums contained a natural rubber made from tree sap (chicle). But since the 1960's, most gum manufacturers have used less-expensive synthetic polymers (aka plastics) instead. These polymers are often listed on the package as "gum base." **If you love gum but would rather not chew on plastic, try Simply Gum, Train Gum or Chicza Rainforest Gum.**



# Around the House



**Buy downloadable versions** of your music, movies, software and video games and avoid the plastic disk, case and wrap.

**Subscribe to newspapers and magazines digitally**—most paper subscriptions arrive in a plastic bag or wrap.

**Use matches** in place of disposable plastic lighters.



**Choose bar soaps** that come wrapped or boxed in paper for your sinks.



**Minimize your use of plastic trash bags.** Have one trash can in your kitchen lined and designated for wet stuff. All other wastebaskets can go without plastic liners and can be transferred to trash bins unbagged. (Seventh Generation makes trash bags made of recycled plastics; and again, beware of "biodegradable" trash bags, many require a commercial composting facility and CANNOT go into the landfill or recycling stream.)

**Choose carpets and household fabrics made of natural materials.** Polyester, acrylic, nylon, rayon, spandex, acetate and kevlar are all made using plastic fibers.



**Ask your dry cleaner not to put your clothing in plastic.** Most have reusable cloth bags they can use instead.

**Repair things when they break** rather than trashing them. You can find instructions online for almost any repair.



**Consider streamlining and/or making your own cleaning products.** Most things you need can be made with 4-5 ingredients, all sold in non-plastic packaging (vinegar, baking soda, rubbing alcohol, borax and essential oils), and many remade products can be used for multiple purposes. Check online for recipes and ideas.



# Personal Care



Choose hairbrushes with **wooden or cork handles and wood or boar bristles** over plastic alternatives.



Replace your shaving cream with **shaving soap**. Shaving soap comes in bar form in a paper box, which leaves only minimal, biodegradable waste.



**Use bar soap** rather than liquid body wash in the bath and shower.

**Purchase deodorants, moisturizers and lip balms in metal or glass containers instead of plastic.** Try Nivea, L'Occitane, Burt's Bee's, Schmidt's, Chagrin Valley, Organic Essence, Rex Apothecary, Taylor's Pure and Natural, and Apple Valley Natural Soap for a range of options.



Buy shampoo and conditioners in **large bottles** to reduce plastic waste. Or try **shampoo bars**, available from Lush, and many of the brands immediately above.

**Oral hygiene products** generate a tremendous amount of non-recyclable plastic waste from toothbrushes, floss and its container, and toothpaste tubes.



Use **toothbrushes** by Preserve, which are made from recycled yogurt cups. Or, for a totally natural, biodegradable toothbrush, try The Environmental Toothbrush. Other options are available from Radius and Eco-DenT.



Try **floss** by Eco-DenT or Radius to avoid both plastic floss and the plastic container.



While Colgate is developing a recyclable toothpaste tube, we're not there yet. In the meantime, you can **try tooth powder**. There are many to choose from, some of which are made by the companies listed on this page. Lush also offers "Toothy Tabs," which are solid toothpaste tablets.

Choose **feminine hygiene products that do not include plastic applicators or plastic packaging**. Try Seventh Generation or Natracare. To go completely waste free, try LunaPads, GladRags or the Diva Cup.



# At School or the Office

Avoid using disposable mechanical pencils and pens. According to the EPA, Americans throw away 1.6 billion disposable pens every year. **You can use wooden (especially bamboo) or refillable mechanical pencils and refillable pens; or you can try biodegradable pens** by Paper Mate, DBA, Biopla Products and Stubby Pencil Studio. **But BEWARE:** read the fine print. Many "biodegradable" plastics are actually worse than regular plastics as they must go to an industrial composting facility in order to biodegrade. They cannot be sent to the landfill and they cannot be put with recycling.



Markers and highlighters also account for huge numbers of non-disposable office products used every year. Crayola alone manufactures nearly 500 million markers each year. You can urge your school to **enroll in ColorCycle**, Crayola's marker recycling program.

Another option is to **collect your used-up pens, markers and highlighters and send them to TerraCycle** where they will be recycled into other products (visit [terracycle.com](http://terracycle.com) for more information).



**Use flash drives or cloud-based services** instead of CD's to take your files with you.

**Don't laminate!** Is there really *anything* that you need to preserve for 1,000 years? Probably not. Consider slipping your document into a reusable plastic sheet protector instead. Or print your document on a fully recyclable and biodegradable piece of cardstock. Better yet, keep your document handy digitally; and if it's junior's artwork you're saving, you can always take a photo. **And ask your children's school to cut the laminating too!**

When buying **mailing or shipping supplies**, choose plastic free options. For example, don't use envelopes with clear windows or adhesive strips, choose padded mailers made with paper pulp instead of plastic bubble wrap, and use newspaper to fill a box in lieu of plastic or styrofoam peanuts.

**Recycle or refill your printer's ink cartridges.** Most major office supply stores take cartridges for recycling and even give you credit toward future cartridge purchases. Look online to identify refill options available for your brand of printer.



**Look for eco-friendly products** in your local office supply or online at sites like [guidedproducts.com](http://guidedproducts.com), [theultimategreenstore.com](http://theultimategreenstore.com), and [thegreenoffice.com](http://thegreenoffice.com).



# Party Planning

Opt for **reusable plates, cups, napkins and utensils** whenever you can.

If you must use disposables, **choose paper options.**

**Don't buy disposable table cloths.** Even the paper ones have a plastic lining. Rent or borrow reusable linens; or invest in a few **washable tablecloths** of your own. There are many that don't require ironing and, while those contain polyester or other plastic-based fibers, they will last a lifetime instead of an evening.

Another great option is **old-fashioned oil cloth**, which can be wiped clean but is made of cotton coated with linseed oil.

**Avoid balloons, especially the mylars.** While latex in its natural state is biodegradable, the latex used in balloons is covered in preservatives and plasticizers so it's not 100% eco-friendly and can take up to a year to degrade, during which time they may be ingested by wildlife. Mylar balloons are worse as they're made of synthetic nylon with a metallic coating, which makes them difficult to recycle.

When choosing **decorations, try to stick with things that are reusable or recyclable.** Avoid anything that will go straight in the trash afterward.

When choosing party favors and giveaways for a bar/bat mitzvah, think about how likely it is that they'll go in the trash within 24 hours. **Try to select items that people will keep and use or that generate no plastic waste at all.**



## Think Before You Buy

Do I really need this product?

What is it made of? Is it made from recycled materials? Is it recyclable?  
How long will it last? What can I do with it when I'm done using it?

Is this available in a more environmentally friendly material or container?

How is this product packaged? Is the packaging recycled? Is the packaging recyclable?  
Is there a comparable product in better packaging?

Will this item be shipped to me? In what type of packaging? Can I buy it locally instead?

How soon do I need it? Can I combine this order with another to reduce the amount of



# Advocate for Change

**Get involved in politics.** Ask your leaders to support the ban on plastic bags in California and encourage them to pass additional bans or other restrictions on disposable plastics that are threatening the sustainability of our planet.

**Educate your friends and family** about the dangers of plastic pollution and encourage them to refuse single-use plastics.

**Refuse to use products containing microbeads.** Thanks to 5Gyres, microbeads have been banned in California. However, there is a phaseout period that lasts until 2020. In the meantime, choose products with natural ingredients, NOT plastic microbes!

**Support the work of the NRDC**, which seeks to (1) hold plastic producers responsible for designing their products in a way that reduces waste; (2) establish international guidelines for curbing plastic pollution; and (3) promote legislation to address pollution from plastic bags and foam takeout containers.

**Join with Heal the Bay** in supporting a Trash Policy that holds each city and county responsible for trash reductions in California's coastal waters, bays, rivers and lakes. In addition, you can let the Los Angeles County Office of Education know that you value science and environmental education in our schools using the proposed letter found at [healthebay.org](http://healthebay.org).

**Write a letter or start a petition**, asking manufacturers of products you like to make their packaging more environmentally friendly.

**Join the campaign** to convince Kraft foods to stop producing the non-recyclable Capri Sun pouch. For more info go to [stopplasticpollution.org](http://stopplasticpollution.org).

If your favorite store or restaurant is using plastic or styrofoam in their packaging or takeout containers, **ask them to change**.

There are so many ways you can get involved on this issue. For more information, check out the following organizations online:

The 5Gyres Institute

WeTap

The Plastic Pollution Coalition

Surfrider Foundation

The Ocean Conservancy

Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC)

Heal the Bay

Californians Against Waste

California Coastkeeper Alliance

Environment California

California Coastal Coalition

Los Angeles Waterkeeper

Friends of LA River

California vs Big Plastic

*Baruh atah adonai elohaynu meleh ha'olam asher kideshanu  
bemitzvotav, vitzevanu lifoal keshomrei adama.*

Blessed are you, Source of all life, who has made us holy  
through your mitzvot and commanded us to act as  
guardians of the Earth. Amen.