

Plastic Pollution



Overview and Policy in Pennsylvania

A throwaway society



A global threat to wildlife

“By 2050, virtually every seabird species on the planet will be eating plastic”



Implications for Infrastructure

- Philadelphia Water Department reports cleaning litter doubles their stormwater costs
- 44 tonnes of trash removed from Delaware & Schuylkill rivers
 - Over half plastic
- PennDOT

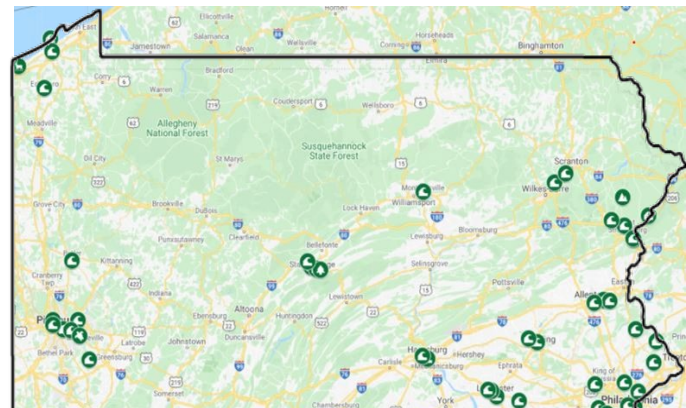


It's bad for our infrastructure & bottom line

- Pennsylvania's 9 largest cities collectively spend \$68.5 million every year on litter
- PennDOT - \$13 mil spent on highway cleanup every year



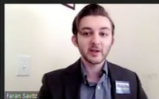
Microplastics in Pennsylvania



What are microplastics?

Plastics doesn't biodegrade, but break into smaller & smaller pieces

Microplastics: Less than 5 millimeters



MICROPLASTIC CONTAMINATION FOUND IN DELAWARE, LEHIGH RIVERS



MICROPLASTIC IN PA'S WATERWAYS



WTAJ STUDIO



STATE COLLEGE

What do we do?



News Radio & Podcasts TV Arts Events Educa

Philly residents are betting city's new bag ban will bring cleaner streets

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Philly and suburban towns are suing Pa. over a law stopping them from banning plastic bags

Pittsburgh City Council introduces proposal to ban single-use plastic bags

West Chester hopes its plastic bag ban sends Harrisburg a message

By Emily Pontecorvo · August 21, 2019

90.5 WESA | By Kiley Koscinski
Published November 22, 2021 at 2:48 PM EST

APRIL 13, 2022

Haverford Township bans plastic bags as more suburban towns begin to take action

Plastic ordinances in PA

- Narberth Borough
- Ambler Borough
- West Norriton Township
- Cheltenham Township
- Lower Merion Township
- Upper Merion Township
- Upper Moreland Township
- Whitemarsh Township
- Springfield Township
- Montgomery Township
- 24 total in PA
- 10 in Montgomery County
- Over 18% of Pennsylvanians
- 875 million single-use plastic bags per year
- 4,800 tons of plastic eliminated per year

Model Legislation

Plastic Bags

- Banned

Paper Bags

- \$0.15 fee per bag

Reusable Bags

- Free! (If you bring your own)

Polystyrene Foam Containers

- Banned

Plastic Utensils and Straws

- By customer request



Implementation

Exemptions

- Waiver application process
- Trash bags, other prepackaged bags
- Produce bags, newspaper bags, raw meat or fish, live animals

It doesn't happen overnight

- Legislation passes, education begins
- After 30 days, retailers are required to post signs
- After 90 days, bans and fees go into effect and enforcement begins

Enforcement?

- If there are regular retail businesses inspections, add a checklist item for plastic ordinance inspection
- Citizen enforcement

More info!

Contact me at faran@pennenvironment.org

For info on action taken in PA or for resources visit

<https://environmentamerica.org/pennsylvania/resources/single-use-plastic-laws-in-pennsylvania/>

For info on microplastics visit <https://bit.ly/PAMicroplastics>

For info on recycling in PA visit <https://bit.ly/UpdateAct101>