

# THE DISPOSABLE CUP CRISIS

Hello America. Did you know that more than 100 BILLION throw-away cups are sent to U.S. landfills each year?

That's enough cup trash to circle the earth an astounding 1,744 times!

Every time you use and toss a paper, plastic or styrofoam cup, it depletes resources, increases CO2 emissions, escalates health risks, and adds to our global landfill crisis.

When 315 million Americans repeat this behavior daily, it adds up to a real problem.



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 **58 BILLION** paper cups thrown away in the U.S. annually


Mostly plastic-coated virgin paper  

◆ **20 Million** trees are cut down to make paper cups each year



◆ **Every four paper cups are responsible for creating 1 pound of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions**



 **12 Billion** gallons of water are used to make a year's worth of paper cups


◆ **53,000 HOMES** could be powered annually by energy needed to make & dispose of paper cups



**MOST PAPER CUPS ARE COATED WITH PLASTIC AND CAN'T BE RECYCLED**




 The paper industry is the largest industrial consumer of water and third largest industrial greenhouse gas emitter


 **25 BILLION** foam cups consumed in the U.S. annually


Polystyrene (PS)  aka "Styrofoam"

**FOAM CUPS ARE MADE OF A NON-BIODEGRADABLE, PETROLEUM-BASED PLASTIC**



 Contains toxic chemicals that can leach and threaten human health and reproductive systems

 **Foam litter hard to contain and is a significant component of land and water pollution**

 **Can be fatal when consumed by birds, fish and wildlife**



**Polystyrene manufacturing 5th largest industrial producer of hazardous waste**



Recycled at low rates & will languish in landfill for **500 years or more**



 **When incinerated by disposal companies produces up to 90 toxic & hazardous chemicals**

 **TENS OF BILLIONS** of single-use plastic cups trashed at U.S. restaurants, cafes & events

Polyethylene Terephthalate (PETE)  Polystyrene (PS)  & Polypropylene (PP) 

**IN THE U.S. AIRLINE INDUSTRY ALONE ALMOST**



**9 BILLION** PLASTIC CUPS ARE USED ANNUALLY



**Plastic creates toxic pollution at every stage of its existence: manufacture, use, and disposal**

**63 pounds** of plastic, per person, per year are trashed in the U.S., comprising up to 30% OF LANDFILL SPACE

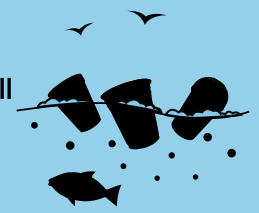


THE LARGEST CATEGORIES OF PLASTIC WASTE are packaging + containers like cups, bottles, lids, straws & take-out foodware

**In 2010, plastic cup recycling rates were so small it was considered negligible**



Plastic trash makes up to 80% of all marine debris ...it's estimated we have 6 times more plastic trash in our oceans than plankton



**Harmful chemicals leached by plastics are present in the bodies of almost every human being, including newborns**

SOURCES: Infographic Research & Design by SteelysDrinkware.com

Cup Waste Data Sources >> Paper Cup Waste: U.S. EPA; Styrofoam Cup Waste: Environmental Defense Fund; Plastic Cup Waste: Compilation of government, restaurant, entertainment and event industry estimates.

>> Factoid Sources: U.S. EPA, Environmental Defense Fund, Plastic Pollution Coalition, Treehugger.com, wikipedia.org, International Agency for Research on Cancer, Californians Against Waste, Earth911, ChrisJordan.com, Alliance for Environmental Innovation, thinkoutsidethebin.com.

 Please share this info to promote more thoughtful cup consumption & choose reusables whenever you can. 