

PORT AND RESOURCE RECOVERY DEPARTMENT

Brown County



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The Plastic Truth

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(Brown County, Wis.) – No matter where you live, plastics are a daily part of your life. Containers, packaging and bags, there is plastic involved. With **Earth Day** approaching on **April 22**, this year's theme is all about reducing plastic consumption to save our planet.

"In the U.S., [each person generates around 287 pounds of plastic each year](#)," said Mark Walter, Brown County Resource Recovery Business Development Manager. "Plastic is such a common material that we don't think twice about choosing a plastic bottle or container when we are at a store. It's that mentality that has driven plastic pollution to the sky-high levels that we see today." Around 60% of the world's total plastic waste ends up in landfills or the environment. So how can you help reduce the impacts of plastic pollution? Refuse, reduce, reuse and recycle.

Refusing can mean bringing your own shopping bags or containers instead of using the plastic options a store may have. It can also mean asking for limited packaging options when shopping online. More than 40% of plastics are produced for packaging. Before you place an order, online or in-store, ask if they have plastic-less packaging.

Reducing the amount of plastic you consume is as simple as saying "no, thank you". Take-away food establishments are a great place to start. When ordering your food, make sure you let the restaurant know that you don't want single-use plastic utensils. When you are out shopping, look for options with non-plastic packaging and avoid using a plastic bag to carry your items home in.

Another way to reduce is by **reusing** materials so that they stay out of the waste stream. Reusable bags, containers and cups are great options over single-use plastics. But don't forget that many types of plastic can be reused again, too. Plastic bottles, food containers and bags all have the potential to be reused again rather than discarded.

When plastic material cannot be reused, make sure it is properly **recycled**. Plastic containers, such as bottles and tubs, should be recycled with your curbside recycling. For plastics such as bags, toilet paper and paper towel wrap collect and bring them to a plastic film recycling drop-off. Many local grocery and department stores offer plastic film collections.

We live in a fast-paced world and plastic materials have made things more convenient. However, plastic has become a big problem for our environment. Everyone has a part to play in limiting the amount of plastic that enters our soil and natural waterways. To learn more about Earth Day efforts on plastic reduction, please visit earthday.org. Resources on how to properly dispose of plastic in Brown County can be found at browncountyrecycling.org, or use the [Waste Wizard](#) or the [Betterbin mobile app](#).

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Brown County Resource Recovery: The purpose of the Brown County Port & Resource Recovery Department is to meet the solid waste disposal needs of local communities and businesses through methods which are environmentally sound and economical.

For more information, visit our website at: www.BrownCountyRecycling.org

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