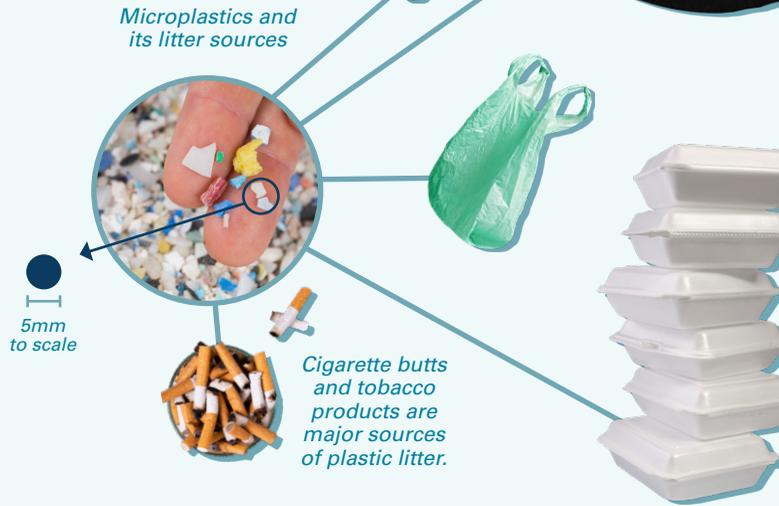


Microplastics 101

What Are Microplastics?

Microplastics—tiny plastic particles smaller than five millimeters—are discharged into the San Francisco Bay at alarming rates. Microplastics have two important sources in both stormwater and wastewater:

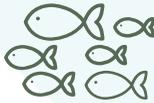
- Plastic litter carried in stormwater that breaks down into smaller pieces over time;
- Fibers from synthetic clothing and textiles that travel in wastewater from our home.



What's the Problem with Microplastics?



Microplastics can contain toxic chemicals that are ingested by Bay wildlife.



Microplastic exposure has been linked to changes in behavior, growth, and reproduction of aquatic animals.



We are exposed to these microplastics through our food, water, and air.

What Can You Do To Help?

While there are regulations that reduce the amount of trash from entering our waterways, and local and state policies that aim to reduce single-use plastic packaging, more work is needed to tackle this significant problem. You can help at home by reducing stormwater and wastewater sources of microplastics:

Reduce Your Use.

Single-use plastics are a common source of litter, which can degrade to microplastics. **TIP:** Look for products that are package-free or subscribe to a refillable product service. Check out cityofpaloalto.org/zerowaste for resources on the holiday tips page!

Don't Rush To Flush!

Only toilet paper should be flushed down the toilet. Wastewater treatment facilities are not designed to remove wipes or other plastics.

Drive Less: Bike, Walk or Use Public Transportation.

Driving releases microplastics from tires, which end up in our storm drains and waterways.

Go Natural.

Select less synthetic clothing when possible, such as cotton or wool. If you choose synthetic, wash clothing less frequently and air-dry to prevent fibers from shedding and ending up in the Bay.

Learn About GSI.

The City's has been installing **Green Stormwater Infrastructure** (GSI) in town. GSI includes landscape design which reduces street ponding during storms and filters pollutants including up to 90% of the microplastics found in runoff.

For more information visit cleanbay.org or call 650.329.2122



Individuals with disabilities who require accommodations to access City facilities, services or programs, or who would like information on the City's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, may contact the City's ADA Coordinator at (650) 329-2550 (voice) or email ada@cityofpaloalto.org.

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