

## Want to Get Serious About Single Use Plastic Waste?

Single-use plastics, or disposable plastics, are used only once before they are thrown away or recycled. These items are things like plastic bags, straws, coffee stirrers, soda and water bottles and most food packaging. Single-use plastic is almost entirely about convenience. Thankfully, there are industries making great strides to reduce their plastic waste. Many airlines have begun recycling plastic cups and straws, and companies such as Nestle and Unilever pledge to make all plastic packaging either 100% recyclable or reusable by 2025. Kroger will be eliminating single use grocery bags as of 2025. Nevertheless, significant progress is yet to be made and much of the effort comes down to us changing our behavior as consumers.



Ohio River—Photo from orsanco.org

Here's what **YOU** can do:

1. **Stop buying water in single-use plastic bottles.** Get a sink or jug-mounted filter at home. Buy a bottle that you can leave in your car. Or even buy separate ones for your car, purse, office and home.
2. **Use cloth or recyclable bags for your groceries.** You can find these bags for sale at most retailers, or a lot of organizations give them away as free promotional items.
3. Earthwise & Purifyou have mesh produce bags available, or skip bagging all together. Don't use plastic bags for vegetables you're going to wash anyway
4. Bring your own coffee mug to your favorite coffee vendor.
5. Own your own straw, or **stop using one.** Paper, metal, and glass alternatives exist.
6. Use glass or Tupperware for your leftovers and storage. Even plastic Tupperware is made of recyclable (and even recycled) material! **Stop or minimize the use of plastic food storage bags.**
7. Rinse out and recycle your plastic bottles. While recyclable plastic bottles should not be reused, these can be recycled many times when properly disposed.
8. Participate in litter / river cleanups.... Clermont County has a Litter Cleanup in July this year See our website for updates: <https://www.clermontswcd.org/>.
9. Lobby your local and state government to make recycling a priority. You can go to <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislators/district-maps> to find out who your state representatives are and how to contact them.

In total, **more than 60 countries have enacted plastic bans and/or fees** in order to cut down on plastic waste, and many more are likely to follow soon. Let each of us do our part to cut down on plastic waste.