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Going Beyond the Plastics Pledge

The actions of individuals to challenge the use of plastics has led to a rising, global movement to combat our plastics problem. Throughout the month of November, NRC's Plastics Pledge encouraged and empowered people to take action with tips and resources for refusing, reducing, and recycling. So many of you joined this campaign, and shared your own great ideas for confronting the plastics problem including these inspiring pledges:

- Write Driscoll's and other berry companies to encourage non-plastic packaging.
- Use environmentally friendly bar soap to reduce shampoo and body wash plastic packaging.
- Bring a reusable container for leftovers when eating out.
- Inspire and educate my friends to refuse single-use plastic and to recycle.
- Be brave enough to suggest businesses do better recycling and offering receptacles.



While our footprint may be small compared to the industrial pollution of plastics, collectively we can make a difference and inspire each other to do more to reduce our plastic use.

Congratulations to the winners of our Plastics Pledge prizes this month! Winning the America Recycles Day prizes were Brynn S. of Lincoln and Kaitlin B. of Omaha. And winning the final prizes are Linell C. of Lincoln and Shawn R. of Lincoln.

PLEDGE STATISTICS

We received pledges from:

Beatrice, Bellevue, Bennington, Council Bluffs, Crete, Eagle, Fremont, Grand Island, LaVista, Lincoln, Ogallala, Omaha, Plattsmouth, Santa Cruz, CA, Schuyler, Staplehurst, Steele City, Stromsburg, and Wayne.

The top 3 pledges include:

1. Bring reusable bags for shopping (98%)
2. Refuse plastic straws (96%)
3. Inform myself as to which plastics can be recycled, and then do it! (88%)

End of Year Giving

We wanted to let you know about an offer we are providing to our year-end donors, making this a perfect time to give. If you donate \$50 or more, we will give you this nifty little eco-friendly lunch kit! Here's a bit of information about them and why we think they're great:

The ECOBAGS Lunch Bag is made of recycled cotton canvas and is great for transporting food or other small items. It has durable stitching,



VELCRO® like closure, and rope for easy carrying. It comes with the NRC logo printed on it, and kids (or adults!) can even add their own decoration with fabric markers.

The Blue Water Bento Seal Cup is plastic-free, leak-proof, and dishwasher and oven safe! It's lighter than glass containers and won't break. Plus, they have a beautiful dark teal silicone lid inspired by the beauty of the ocean.

We'll be in touch to get your lunch kit to you a little later this month!

DONATE

Better and Worse

When I was the administrator of a retirement condominium, one of my favorite people was Robert Hughes, president of the condominium board. He served as a Marine in the Pacific during WWII, suffering through some of the most horrible human-created tragedies imaginable. After the war was over, he married, started a family, and taught history in Lincoln Public Schools until retirement. When discussing a high-level problem or challenge, Mr. Hughes would often say, "Well, some things get better and some things get worse."

I was resistant to that idea. It was my belief that collectively we would respond to our better angels, recognize problems, and take action so that things wouldn't have to get worse. Over time, Mr. Hughes' words have resonated with me. The worsening effects of climate change, plastics pollution in the oceans, groundwater contamination, extreme weather events, wars and refugees of violence are but some of the tragedies of our time.

It seems to me our first task is to determine where we hold the power and control to make change, whether as an individual, a group, or a community. Well-meaning people often don't realize how much power they have. But there is ample evidence that many people do and they are acting on it.

Some examples: There is a growing number of large retailers that have responded to pressure to eliminate toxic chemicals from their packaging and products. They have been ranked and analyzed by an organization called [Mind the Store](#). Domestic paper mills are springing up to fill the gap that China left open through their recovered materials ban. Back home in Nebraska, better materials management systems are being instituted by cities, such as Pay As You Throw in Bellevue, and the landfill cardboard ban in Lincoln. And NRC was pleased to have a great response to our online pledge for individuals to reduce single use plastics.

All challenges pose opportunities for change. At the end of 2018, let us resolve to find our power, link arms, and tip the scales a wee bit toward "better".

Very best wishes,
Julie

P.S. The ranks of NRC members are growing! Keep your eyes peeled for the 2019 membership renewal letter coming soon.



Webinars & Events



[Impacting School Sustainability from the Top Down and the Bottom Up](#)
FREE webinar | Tuesday, December 4th | noon-1 pm | [REGISTER](#)

[SLPS: The State of Electric Transport in Nebraska](#)
Thursday, December 6th | 3:30-4:30 pm | [JOIN](#)

[Keep America Beautiful/Coca-Cola Public Spaces Recycling Bin Grants](#)
Application Period Now Open through December 30th | [APPLY](#)

Articles of Interest



[A unique industry collaboration is bottling a new future for U.S. glass recycling](#)

Recycling one glass bottle saves enough energy to light a 100-watt bulb for four hours, power a computer for 30 minutes or operate a television for 20 minutes.

[Survey indicates brands and government can help improve recycling behavior](#)

Latest U.S. poll suggests recycling needs to be made easier for waste generators

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