

Circular Claims Fall Flat Again: the state of plastics recycling in the USA



John Hocevar
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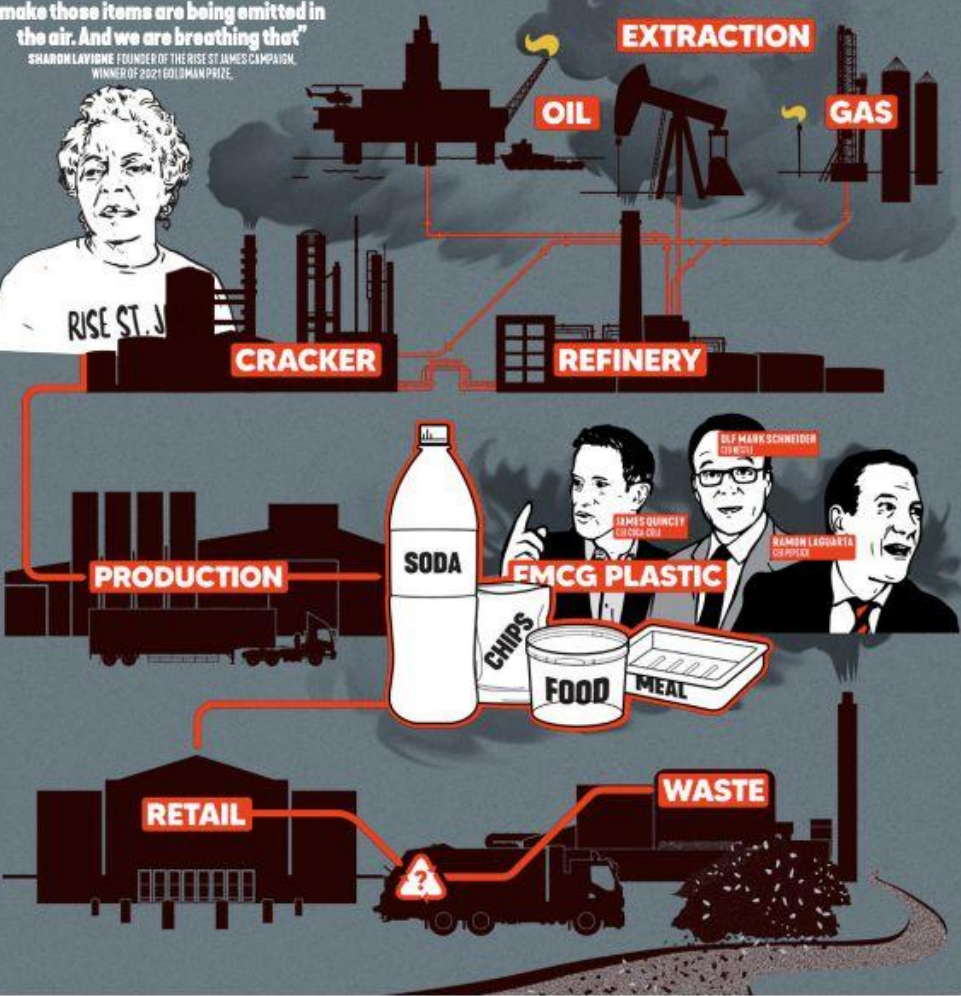


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FROM BREATHE THIS AIR, PEAK PLASTIC FOUNDATION.

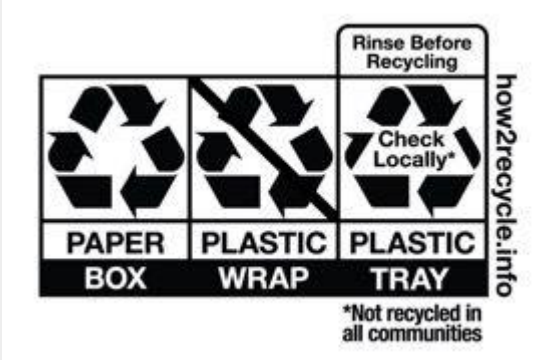
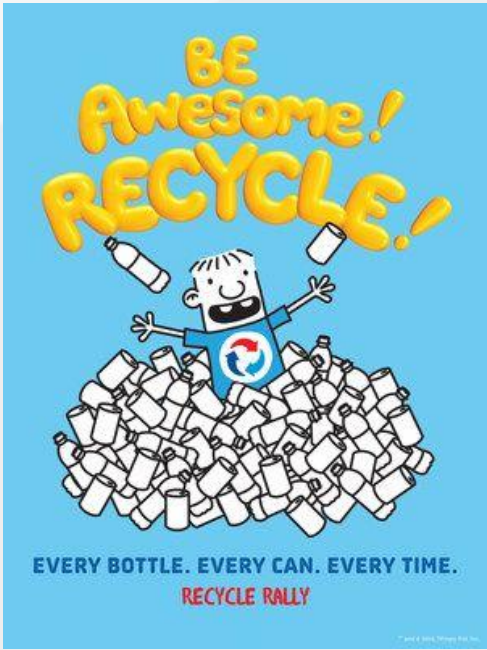
"The plastics we use in our everyday life, the chemicals that are used to make those items are being emitted in the air. And we are breathing that"

SHARON LAVIGNE, FOUNDER OF THE RISE ST. JAMES CAMPAIGN, WINNER OF 2021 GOLDMAN PRIZE.



Single-use plastic is dangerous throughout its entire life cycle.

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CIRCULAR CLAIMS FALL FLAT AGAIN

2022 UPDATE

U.S. households generated an estimated 51 million tons of plastic waste in 2021, only 2.4 million tons of which was recycled.

Production has increased, and recycling rates have dropped.

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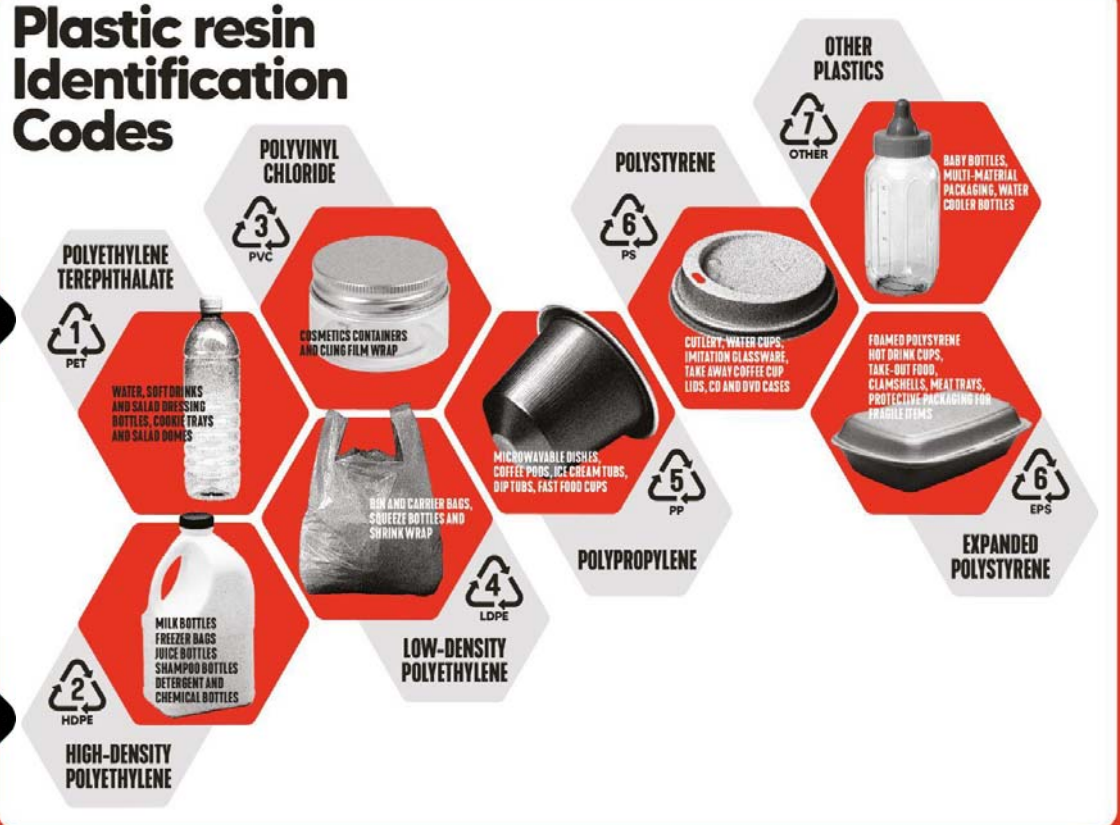
Plastic recycling rates have dropped below 6%

Plastic resin Identification Codes

20.9%



10.3%



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Why are plastic recycling rates so low?



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REASON 1: PLASTIC WASTE IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO COLLECT



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REASON 2: MIXED PLASTIC WASTE CANNOT BE RECYCLED TOGETHER



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REASON 3: RECYCLED PLASTIC OFTEN CARRIES TOXICITY RISKS



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REASON 4: PLASTIC RECYCLING IS NOT ECONOMICAL



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So... is Greenpeace against recycling???



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What are the solutions?

Waste Management Hierarchy



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**¡Necesitamos un
tratado de plásticos
ambicioso ahora!**

**We need an ambitious
plastics treaty now!**



A quick note on chemical recycling

NRDC: “CHEMICAL RECYCLING” OF PLASTIC IS JUST GREENWASHING INCINERATION

WWF: There are significant concerns that these technologies are energy-intensive, pose risks to human health, and/or will not be able to practically recycle plastic beyond what mechanical recycling already achieves.

Ocean Conservancy: Pyrolysis, gasification and other chemical recycling technologies are just a fancy way to say “burning plastics for energy.”

Brightmark, Georgia county cancel plastic-to-fuel project



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Questions?



**Feel free to get in touch if
you have more questions!**

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