

Problem with recycling



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In my class, we started watching a documentary that highlighted recycling and the issues that plastic, chemicals, and the troubles it causes to ocean life. After watching this documentary for a short period of time I was feeling frustrated. I am frustrated that these major issues are being taken lightly by so many people. As a college student we are preached to about doing our part to save the world by recycling. This documentary was very insightful as I found out that not all plastic can be recycled.

Plastic and its products are causing damage to the ocean life because fish are eating the harmful waste. Another issue that was mentioned was how chemicals are dangerous. Many chemicals are not being tested in the United States of America before they are put out for everyone to use so the harm it is causing is affecting a majority of our population. I had vaguely heard about these problems, but I always thought that these people, commonly known as "tree huggers" were just going overboard and that there really wasn't that much harm being done. The first issue I will address is the problem with recycling.

Like I stated earlier not everything is recyclable. I used to just throw my plastic bottles in the plastic recycling bin right outside my door but then after watching the documentary, learned that the lids on plastic bottles could not be recycled; are they plastic too? I wanted to do some research myself on what was and wasn't recyclable but each web site was a little different, so who do I listen to? After comparing one of the web sites to some of my plastics, I realized that most of my plastics had the recycling arrows on them, which I used to think meant that the item was a recyclable item.

This made me angry as some of the items are not recyclable which makes me feel like it's false advertisement and a way to make a sell. I tried recycling more than usual to do my part in saving the world and took the bottle caps off of every bottle I threw away. I might not be recycling everything properly, but some of it is recyclable and it makes me feel good knowing I am doing my part in making a difference. The next issue that bothers me was the dangers plastic has brought to the ocean.

Multiple pieces are being injured because of the garbage (including plastic) in the ocean. In the Great Pacific, there are patches of plastic waste, along with other garbage, where the sun is breaking the waste down into tiny pieces and the fish are mistaking it for food. After the fish eats the biodegradable plastic, they can not digest it and often die. The fish food to plastic ratio used to be 1: 6 in favor of the plastic; now the ratio is 40: 1 in favor of the plastic. This issue has had a negative impact on the marine animals.

In Nebraska, we do not live by an ocean where I could easily organize or join another group with a clean up day, so instead I decided I would pick up any trash I saw on the ground and continue to recycle any of the items I thought were recyclable. A lot of these plastic items are free, I feel if they charged for these items there would not be as many and would be less likely to end up in the ocean! Once again I worked hard doing my part this week and felt like I had made a small impact in helping save ocean life, but a small impact is better than no impact! The third and final issue I will address is the chemical problem.

I did not know that several omen forces an issue if a problem arises. It is like chemicals are all innocent and create no harm until they are proven guilty. I felt terrible for EJB knowing his new child's toys contained chemicals that had never been tested. What would happen if the child had a reaction to these chemicals and something caused him serious harm? Sometimes the affects chemicals have can be irreversible and could cause the child to have permanent damage and in such cases parents must deal with these problems when they show side effects of the chemicals causing damage to them.

For this issue, I talked about it with my friends to inform others of how chemical testing is obsolete and Just used when it causes a problem with someone. If we could be an advocate for chemical testing and get the word out to the public and have some of them lobby for our congressman to set laws for items to be tested for chemicals to ensure the publics safety. Once again, I feel this does not create a large impact on the harm plastic and chemicals are causing but it is a start to making our world a happier and healthier place to live.