



Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition

Supporting Organized Voices and Empowered Communities Since 1987

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Microplastics Pollution

1. We believe that microplastics are an emerging pollutant source that should be studied in the Ohio River. Health effects in humans are uncertain but we know the pollutants are getting into water and the food chain (see articles below on plastics in bottled water, beer and salt).
2. We don't know of any baseline testing of Ohio River waters for these pollutants (This testing is underway in other bodies of water, such as the Great Lakes, and it can be simple and relatively inexpensive; see articles below). We request that baseline testing in the Ohio River be done as soon as possible. "Nurdles" (see below), and other petrochemical byproducts will become common if the Appalachian Storage Hub is developed.
3. Effects of plastics are already overwhelming many water and waste disposal systems. In the USA, the Tennessee River stands out as an example of horrendous plastic pollution. We do not want the Ohio River to become that gravely polluted, yet we believe it could happen soon, due to petrochemical build up in our region.

Perspective from Dr. Randi Pokladnik, a PhD-level chemist: <https://www.heraldstaronline.com/opinion/local-columns/2020/01/guest-column-were-past-time-for-global-plastic-intervention/>

"Nurdles" as a new pollutant, near Pittsburgh: <https://qz.com/1689529/nurdles-are-the-biggest-pollution-disaster-youve-never-heard-of/>

Sources of plastic pollution, and potential harmful chemicals found in this pollution: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0380133015000064>

Investigative article on global plastics pollution: https://orbmedia.org/stories/Invisibles_plastics?fbclid=IwAR1R4E3QOoOnQWwCRIsTGxYshshuovc9oscRTkqdeiMu88SBlyiqUB4lmN4

Investigative report on plastics in bottled water: <https://orbmedia.org/stories/plus-plastic/text>

Plastics pollution documented in numerous Great Lakes tributaries:

<https://pubs.acs.org/doi/10.1021/acs.est.6b02917>

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2018/08/28/plastic-study-finds-tiny-synthetic-bits-great-lakes-tap-water-and-beer/971888002/>

Plastics particles found in water, beer and salt: <https://www.sph.umn.edu/news/plastic-particles-common-tap-water-beer-salt/>

Plastics found in human fecal material: <https://www.health.com/home/microplastics-human-poop>