

Spotlight on Sustainability

From Your Ontario County Eco-Heroes

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Eco-Holiday Spotlight:

June 5th

Designated by the United Nations, World Environment Day is organized around a theme that focuses attention on a particularly pressing environmental concern. This year's theme, "*Beat Plastic Pollution*" was chosen by host country India to draw our attention to how we can make changes in our everyday lives to reduce the heavy burden of plastic pollution in our natural places, our wildlife and on our own health.

World Environment Day is a day for everyone around the world to take ownership of their environment and to actively engage in the protection of our earth.



www.worldenvironmentday.global



Focus: Preventing plastic pollution and encouraging solutions for a healthy ocean

The oceans cover about two-thirds of the surface of the Earth and are the very foundation of life. They generate most of the oxygen we breathe, absorb a large share of carbon dioxide emissions, provide food and nutrients, and regulate climate.

They are important economically for countries that rely on tourism, fishing and other marine resources for income and as the backbone of international trade.

A healthy world ocean is critical to our survival.

MICROPLASTICS – How they affect our water supply

Plastic is the most prevalent type of marine debris found in our ocean and Great Lakes. Plastic debris can come in all shapes and sizes, but those that are less than five millimeters in length (or about the size of a sesame seed) are called "microplastics."

Microplastics come from a variety of sources, including from larger plastic debris that degrades into smaller and smaller pieces. In addition, microbeads, a type of microplastic, are very tiny pieces of manufactured polyethylene plastic that are added as exfoliants to health and beauty products, such as some cleansers and toothpastes. These tiny particles easily pass through water filtration systems and end up in the ocean and Great Lakes, posing a potential threat to aquatic life. Aquatic life and birds can mistake microplastics for food. In 2015, the U.S. banned the use of microbeads. But microplastics are still a huge problem. You can help by keeping plastics out of the ocean and our local water resources.

Check out these additional resources:

- <http://www.worldoceansday.org/plastic-pollution-resources-1>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bic7QEVN4&feature=youtu.be>

HOW TO GIVE BACK

Change Perspective

Encourage others to think about what clean water means to them and future generations

Learn

Discover how our daily actions affect our water and our environment

Change our ways

Take care of our backyard and our community. Modify our habits and encourage family, friends and community to do the same.

DID YOU KNOW

We all live in a watershed. A watershed is an area of land that drains into a body of water, such as a river, lake, reservoir, estuary, sea or ocean.

The Oswego River/Finger Lakes Watershed is one of the largest in New York State and includes most of the Finger Lakes.

Water travels over farm fields, forests, lawns and city streets, or it seeps into the soil and travels as groundwater.

What you do at your home affects everyone downstream and around you.

For more information visit www.dec.ny.gov



"Without a healthy environment we cannot end poverty or build prosperity. We all have a role to play in protecting our only home: we can use less plastics, drive less, waste less food and teach each other to care." - UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres