

# UCLA Single-Use Plastics Policy

**UCLA** **Sustainability**



<https://www.sustain.ucla.edu/single-use-plastic-policy/>

# The Truth About Plastic

- Single-use plastics are a global problem that cause environmental degradation and damaging health effects to humans.
- Single-use plastics take hundreds of years to break into microplastics but never fully disappear, yet they are used only once and thrown away.

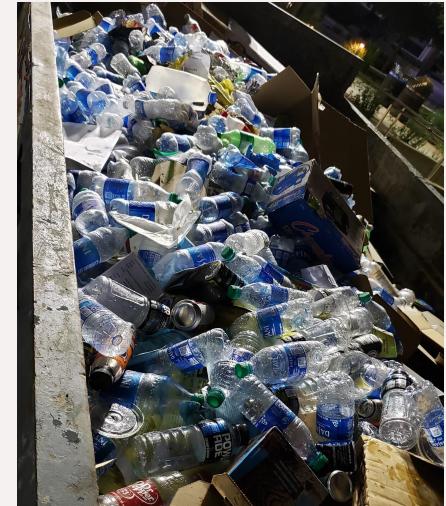


# The Truth About Plastic

- UCLA generates an excessive amount of plastic waste that circulates through the campus on a daily basis.
- Waste audits done at Powell Library revealed that over 100 lbs of plastic waste is generated in one day in just this one location. At just one athletic event at Pauley Pavilion, over 450 lbs of waste was generated.

From left to right:

1. Student holding one of many buckets of plastic disposables from Powell Library
2. Stack of beverage cups generated from Pauley Pavilion after an athletic event
3. Photo of the recycling roll-off filled with water bottles from the same athletic event



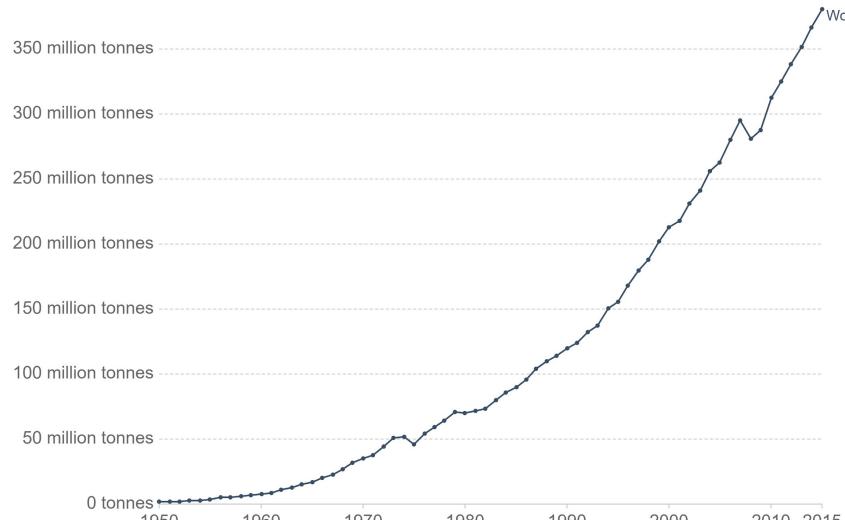
# The Truth About Plastic

- The global production of plastic is growing rapidly. In 2015, it reached 381 million tons which is roughly equivalent to the mass of two-thirds of the world population.

Global plastics production, 1950 to 2015

Annual global polymer resin and fiber production (plastic production), measured in metric tonnes per year.

Our World  
in Data

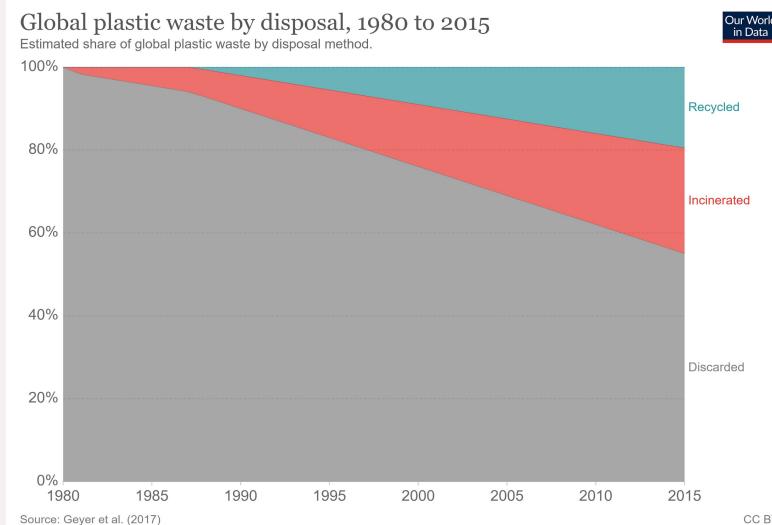


Source: Geyer et al. (2017)

CC BY

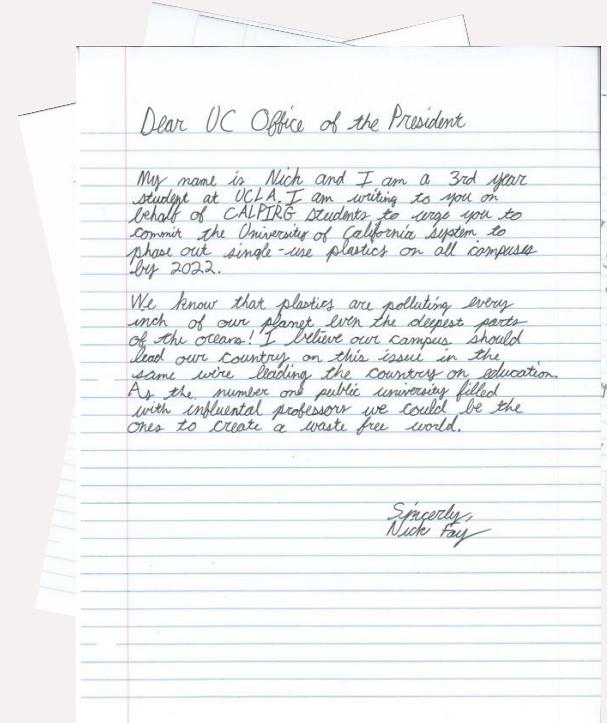
# The Truth About Plastic

- Annually, less than 20% of plastics are actually recycled worldwide, most end up in the oceans, burned in incinerators, or buried in landfills.
- Due to stricter laws from China and other countries that accept recyclables, the recycling rate is now even lower.



# Student Advocacy Campaign

- 8 Campuses
- +12,000 Petitions
- 6 Signed Senior Administrators
- 3 Supportive Senior Administrators
- 18 Signed Student Leaders
- 4 Student Government Resolutions



# Growing Support

Universities	UCLA, UC, CSU, CU Boulder, GWU
Corporations	IKEA, Unilever
Pilot Programs	TerraCycle Loop reusables program: Clorox, P&G, Nature's Path, Haagen-Dazs, Kroger, and Walgreens
Nations	The EU and more than 120 Countries
States	EPR in Maine and Oregon, Eight states ban plastic packaging
Localities	Santa Monica, Manhattan Beach, Malibu, West Hollywood (pending), Berkeley, and others
Airports	SFO, Melbourne, and Dubai

# UCLA Single-Use Plastics Policy

Campus Search

# UCLA ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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## UCLA Policy 809 : Single-Use Plastics

Issuing Officer: Administrative Vice Chancellor - Administrative Vice Chancellor's Office  
Responsible Office: Sustainability - [Look Up Contact Person](#)  
Effective Date: October 13, 2020  
Revision History: [APP History](#)

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### I. PURPOSE & SCOPE

In recognizing the detrimental impacts of single-use plastics on ecosystems and communities, that plastic never truly disappears, and that only a small percentage of plastic is successfully recycled, this Policy in accordance with [UC Policy on Sustainable Practices](#), is intended to decrease UCLA's collective impact by reducing the number of plastics that are purchased and distributed on UCLA owned and leased property ("UCLA Property").

This Policy applies to:

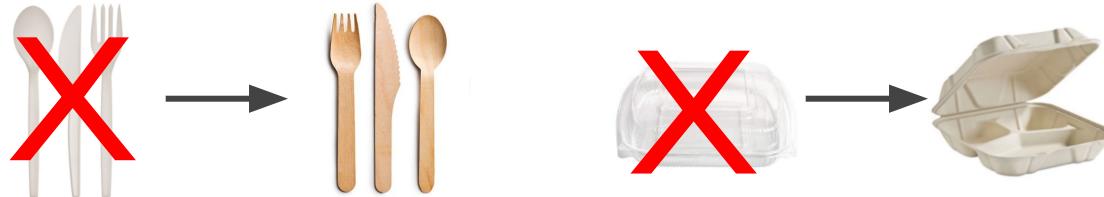
- Foodservice Facilities, Retail Stores, and vending machines on University Property;
- UCLA and non-affiliate individuals and groups selling and/or distributing food and/or beverages on UCLA property, including at meetings and events;

# Single-Use Plastics Policy Timeline

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| <b>Jan 1, 2021</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Eliminate plastic bags.</li><li>▫ Eliminate plastic beverage bottles at indoor events of less than 100.</li><li>▫ Replace single-use plastic foodware accessory items (utensils, lids, straws) at all locations.</li><li>▫ Replace single-use plastic foodware items (cups, bowls, plates) at to-go foodservice facilities.</li></ul> |
| <b>Oct 1, 2021</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Eliminate plastic beverage bottles at all events and meetings.</li><li>▫ Replace single-use plastic foodware items (cups, bowls, plates) at all foodservice facilities.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Sept 1, 2023</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Eliminate plastic beverage bottles from all retail stores and vending machines. Prioritize the installation of hydration stations.</li></ul>  |
| <b>Continuous</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▫ Transition to marine degradable materials whenever possible.</li><li>▫ Prepared, packaged food must be locally recyclable or compostable.</li><li>▫ Timelines all subject to change due to existing contracts with vendors.</li></ul>   |

# How to Comply

**Foodware Items** - Replace single-use plastic foodware items with reusable or locally compostable fiber-based disposables at all meetings and events.



**Single-Use Bottled Beverages** - Replace single-use plastic beverage bottles with reusable or recyclable alternatives (aluminum or glass) at all meetings and events.



# Reusable vs. Disposable



## Why we encourage reusables?

- Reduce waste that goes to disposal facilities
- Reduce pollution of environment
- Reduce consumption of our natural resources

## How to promote reusables?

- Create discounts or incentives for bringing your own reusables
- Sell reusable products and offer discount programs
- Rewards program
- Charge for using disposables

# Reusables and Safety



## Are reusables safe during the pandemic?

- All UCLA foodservice facilities adhere to CDC procedures.
- All reusables are washed and sanitized per the CA Retail Code.
- As of June 2020, CDC states “because of poor survivability of these coronaviruses on surfaces, there is likely very low risk of spread from food products or packaging.”

## How do we protect employees handling food and soiled reusables?

- Wear appropriate PPE - eye goggles or face shield, face covering, impermeable apron, and disposable gloves.
- Reusable PPE should be disinfected between uses.

# Locally Compostable



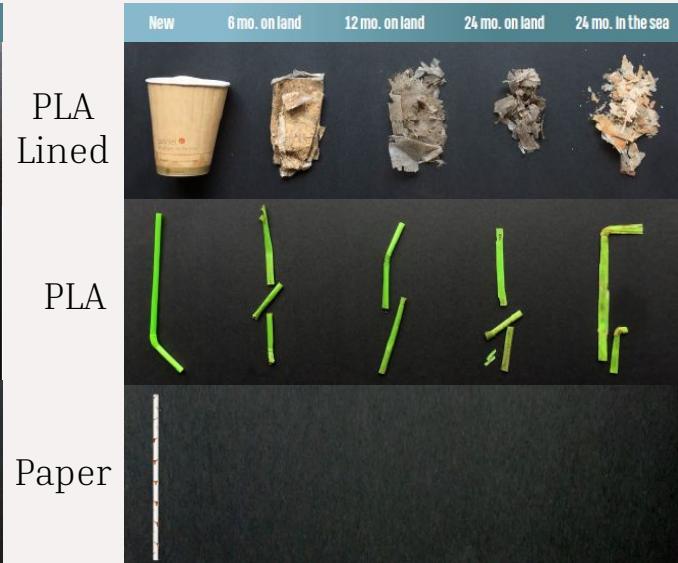
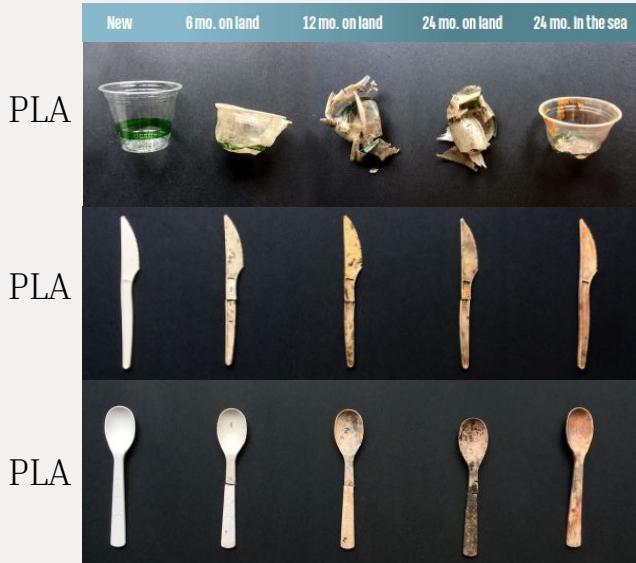
- Locally compostable means only products that are composted by our local waste hauler, Athens Services.
- Athens defines compostables as unbleached 100% plant-fiber based products with no plastic, wax, or bioplastic coating/liner.
- The following descriptors do NOT ensure that the items are plastic-free or will degrade quickly enough to be composted:
  - 100% compostable
  - Certified compostable
  - Eco-friendly
  - Biodegradable



# Bioplastics (PLA)



- Bioplastics mean plastic materials produced from renewable biomass sources, rather than from petroleum.
  - Includes polylactic acid (PLA) plastics
  - NOT considered locally compostable



# How to Sort Your Compost



- ALL food items, including meat, bones, shells, and dairy.



- Soiled 100% fiber/paper products, such as greasy napkins, paper plates, and paper bags.

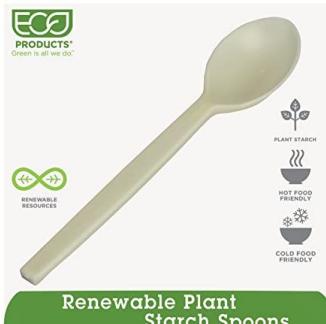


- And yes, (moldy) food can be inside of the paper packaging!

# How to Sort Your Compost



- The term “biodegradable” or “eco-friendly” does not signify a sustainable product because it is not mandated by any authority.
- Bioplastics/compostable plastics, labeled #7 PLA (polylactic acid).
- Plant Starch Materials (PSM).
- Recyclable materials or landfill items.



# Cost Comparison



- When comparing the per unit cost of various **fiber-based** foodware items to their **PLA alternatives** from our distributor or Amazon, the cost is lower across the board.

Item	Cost of PLA Compostable	Cost of Fiber Compostable	% Reduction in Cost from PLA
Fork	\$0.12	\$0.06	-50%
Spoon	\$0.12	\$0.05	-58.3%
Knife	\$0.08	\$0.05	-37.5%
9oz cup with lid	\$0.135	\$0.10	25.9%
12oz round bowl	\$0.25	\$0.21	-16%
Hot cup lid	\$0.07	\$0.05	-28.6%
Straw	\$0.05	\$0.043	-53.5%

# Cost Comparison



- When comparing the per unit cost of various **fiber-based** foodware items to their **plastic** alternatives from Amazon, the cost is marginally higher.
- Despite the slightly increased direct cost, the indirect costs of plastic are much higher due to the massive damage caused by production, recycling, incineration, and pollution.
- According to the [Plastic Waste in Los Angeles County](#) report, “state taxpayers pay close to \$420 million each year in beach cleanup and prevention efforts across all waste categories, with plastic items routinely identified as the most common litter type in coastal litter inventories”.

# Single-Use Plastics Policy Implementation Guide

Plastic Policy Implementation Guide

File Edit View Tools Help

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- Policy Comparison
- Definitions
- Cost Considerations
- Exemptions
  - Paper Cups
- Implementation For Institut...
- Enforcement
- Exemption Process
- Implementation for Event O...**
  - Implementation for Foodse...
  - Foodservice Managers
  - Caterers
  - Retail and Vending Operators
- Implementation for Depart...
- Office & Meetings
- Events
- Implementation for Students
  - Meetings
  - Events
  - Fundraisers
- Other Areas for Plastic Red...
- Packaging Products

## Implementation for Event Organizers

This section is meant for event organizers who contract out services, such as catering or event rentals, or purchase food and beverages. In general, the encouraged options are to use catering services with reusable foodware and accessory items, only provide foodware accessory items upon request, and to encourage guests to bring their own reusables. If disposables are necessary, foodware products must be made from 100% fiber-based materials to be compostable and beverage containers must be glass, aluminum, or paper-based. We recommend that you work with your vendors to find suitable alternatives to single-use plastics. Please see below instructions for event organizers.

Item	Date	How to Comply	Resources
Plastic Bags	Jan 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Eliminate all plastic bags</li><li>Use reusable bags if necessary</li></ul>	
Foodware and Accessory Items	Jan 2021 for Foodware Accessory Items Oct 2021 for Foodware Items	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ordering from UCLA Catering<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Catering operations on campus must also be following these guidelines and have compliant options available.</li><li>If you are offered single-use plastics please send an <a href="#">Anonymous Reporting Form</a></li></ul></li><li>Ordering catering from restaurant<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Only purchase from restaurants that provide food in plastic-free options</li><li>Decline plastic bags, accessory items, and serving utensils and provide your own reusables or compostables if necessary</li><li>If you must purchase from a restaurant that does not have plastic-free options, please submit an <a href="#">Exemption Form</a></li></ul></li></ol>	<p><a href="#">Plastics Alternative Matrix</a></p> <p>Order compostable cutlery and other accessory items from <a href="#">UCLA Coffee Services</a></p> <p>Questions? Email <a href="mailto:sustainability@ha.ucla.edu">sustainability@ha.ucla.edu</a></p> <p>Need additional compost and trash bins for an event? Please submit a <a href="#">Facilities Service Request (FSR)</a>. The <a href="#">Pricing List</a> can be found under "Event Trash Boxes and Set Up"</p>

# Plastics Alternatives Matrix

Plastic Alternatives Matrix

Last edit was made 13 days ago by DEPT zerowaste

NOTE: These are generalizations and may not be accepted at every compost facility. Check in with your local sustainability or zero waste manager to confirm what items are compostable at your location.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1						
2	Item	Plastic (not permissible)	Alternative (preferred)	Alternative (acceptable)	Alternative (acceptable)	
3		The items in this column are made of plastic and therefore not permissible under the Policy. This includes plastics 1-7 and may also include PLA (compostable plastic), depending on local hauling restrictions.	This column lists preferred materials in each category. Overall reusable items are preferred. For accessory items, provide upon request or do not provide if not necessary.	If reusable are not possible, this column lists acceptable disposable alternatives. In general, look for unlined, unbleached 100% fiber-based products. Strive for materials free of PFAS.		
12	Cold Cup Lids		Do not provide lids or available only upon request			
13	Hot Cup Lids		Do not provide lids or available only upon request			
						

# Exemptions and Compliance

- When reasonable alternatives do not exist, you may submit a request for exemption through the [Exemption Form](#).
- We currently only have an exemption for paper cups with PLA plastic inner lining. Our waste hauler has deemed that this PLA is thin enough to be processed in their facility.
- If you have an existing stock of non-compliant plastic products, you may use up your supply and purchase compostables or reusables going forward.
- If prohibited single-use plastic items are seen on campus, please submit anonymous tips with the [Anonymous Reporting Form](#).

# Questions?

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