



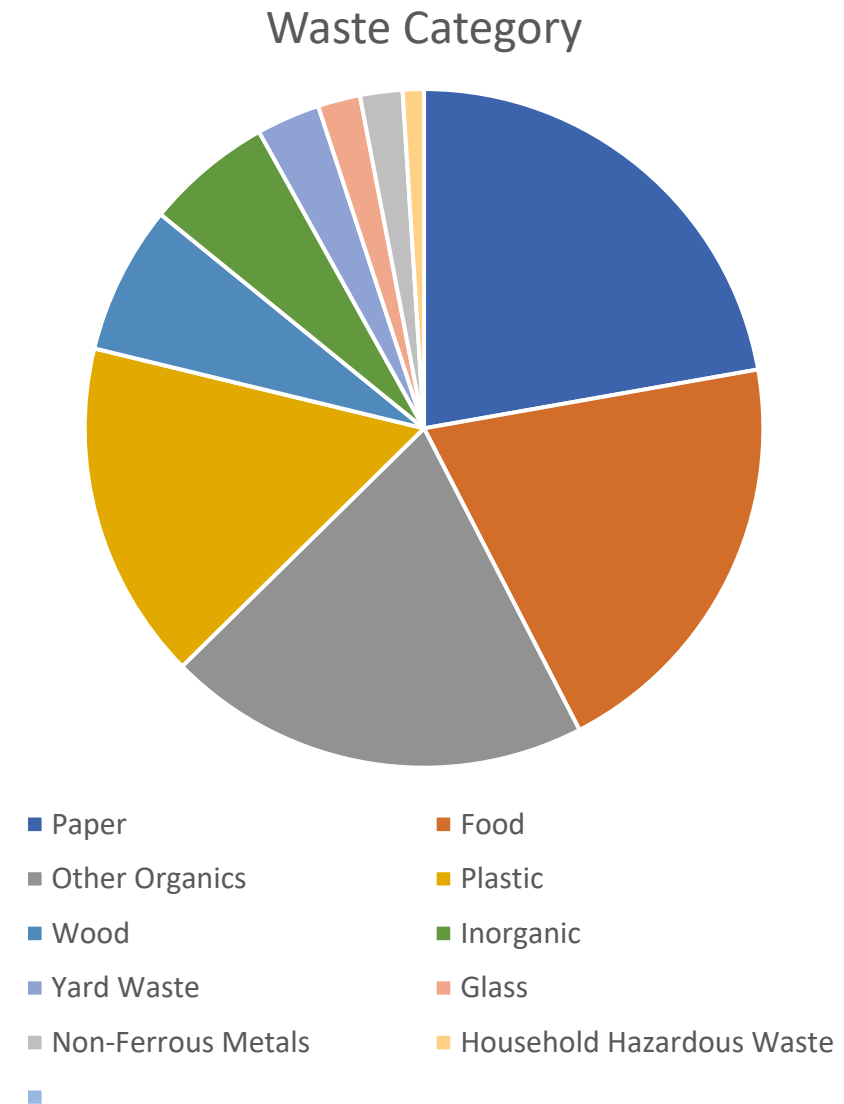
Waking up to our Plastic and Packaging Nightmare

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Zero Waste Lead

The Covid-19 Pandemic's Legacy?



Plastic Makes up about 16% of Montgomery County's Waste Stream
Source: Montgomery County Data, Waste Recycling by Material Type: Achievement and Opportunity, 2015.



Largest Categories of Plastic Waste (Tons Generated)

- Film Plastic (not shopping bags) = 51,679
- Narrow Neck Plastics (e.g., #1 & #2 beverage bottles) = 23,034
- Other Rigid Plastic = 20,332
- Plastic Tubs & Lids = 8,785
- Shopping Bags = 3,003



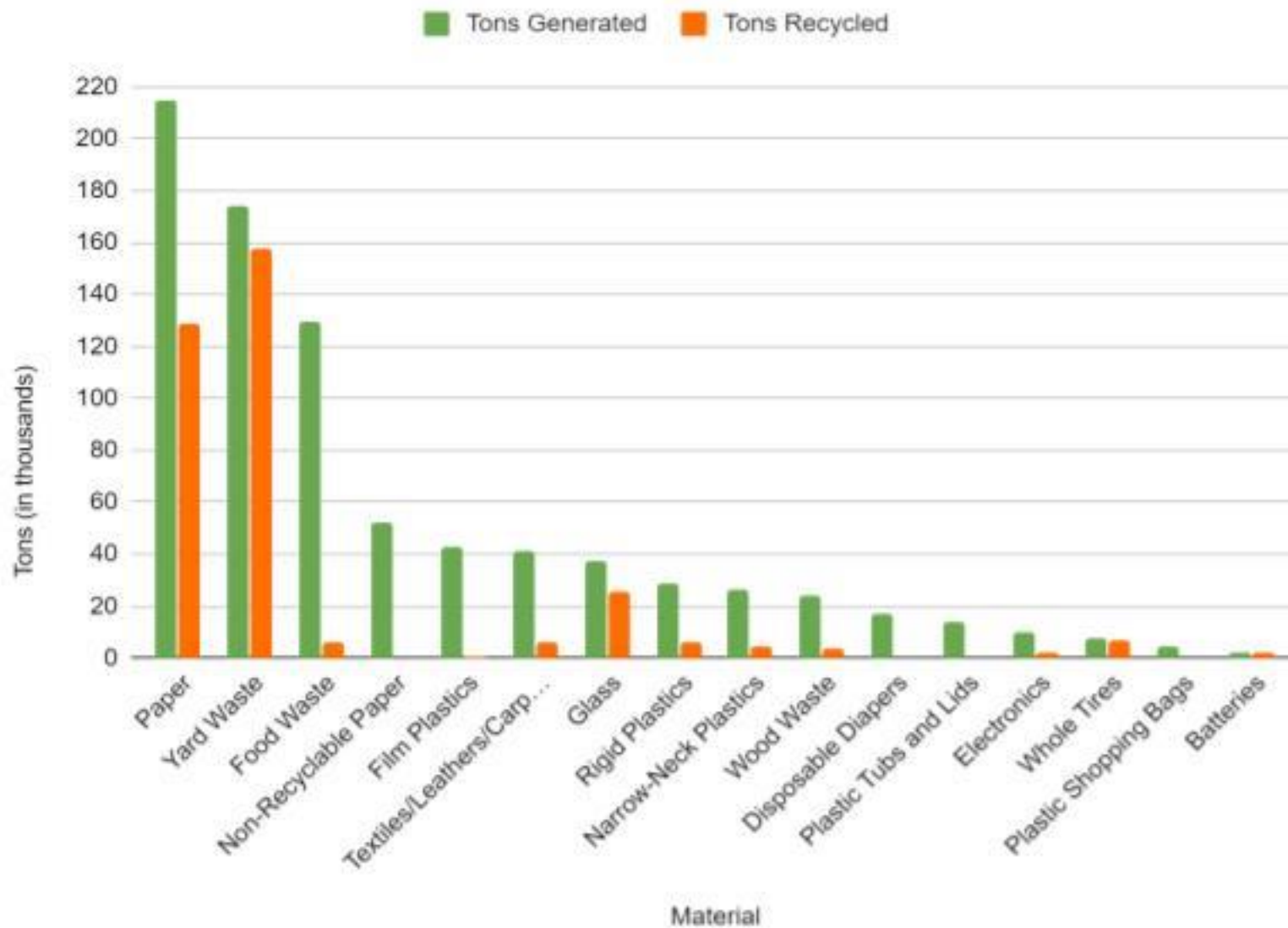
Montgomery
County
generates
about 20
tons of
Plastic Film
Waste Per
Person Per
Year

Why should we care about plastic waste? Can't it just be recycled?

- The answer is only a tiny percentage of our plastics are getting recycled.
- The full life cycle impacts associated with the provision of food and consumer goods represents 42 percent of the nation's annual GHG emissions (U.S. EPA Office of Solid Waste and Emergency Response 2009).
- Packaging these goods for consumption has tremendous climate implications.
- Poor communities and communities of color live in the shadow of petrochemical plants in the Gulf and waste incinerators in Baltimore. Plastic is made and burned at the expense of the most vulnerable in society.
- Marine animals and fish ingest plastic waste.



Total Tons of Waste Generated and Recycled in Montgomery County, 2017

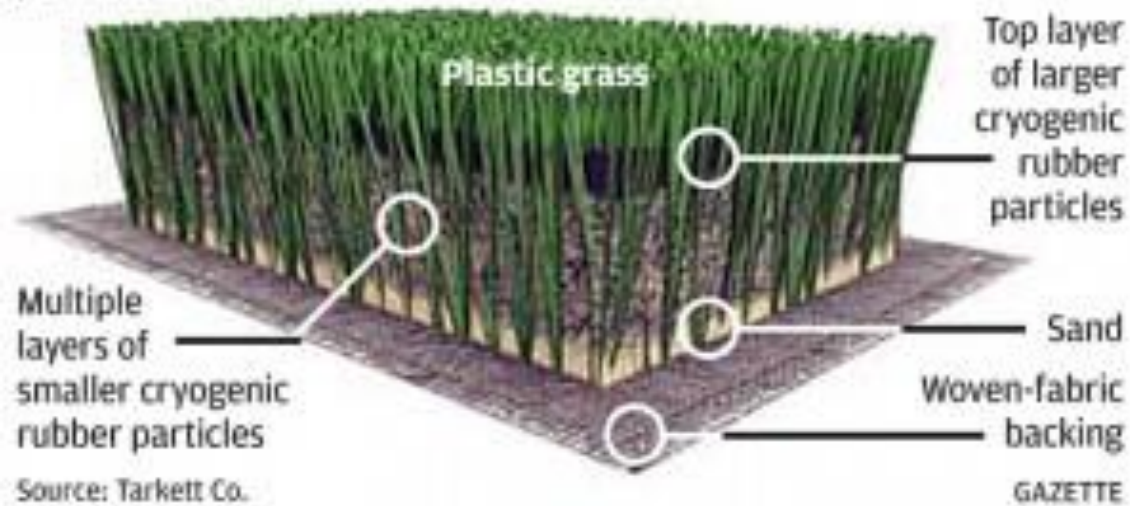


Source: Table 4.2, Waste Recycling and Material Type: Achievement and Opportunity, Montgomery County, MD, Division of Solid Waste Services

Designed for the Dump: Hidden plastic waste

What's in Field Turf?

An artificial turf field like FieldTurf is made up of plastic grass fibers held in place by up to 21 layers of different-sized cryogenic rubber particles and sand.



Sierra Club MC Supports

- Ban plastic shopping bags and charge 10-cents for paper (60% of MoCo shoppers changed behavior. MOMs, Aldi, Lidl, provide no plastic bags)
- Extend foam food ban to include #6 plastics. Support Bill 33-20. Extend ban to trays for meat, poultry & seafood, egg cartons & outside products.
- Straws on request only; no plastic straws, even those made from plants. Support Bill 32-20 with amendments to include To-Go condiment packets and utensils on request only
- State Bills: Plastic Bag Ban & 10-cents for paper: HB 209/SB 313. Bottle bill led by Delegate Love.
- Federal Bill: Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act to put a pause on plastic production and support Extended Producer Responsibility. (H.R.5845/S.3263 – Norton, Raskin, Ruppersberger, Sarbanes & Trone have co-sponsored)

Simple Actions You Can Take to Reduce Your Plastic Footprint

- Refuse to purchase products packaged in plastic. Before you order something on-line, ask the seller what kind of packaging is used. Contact sustainability offices of businesses where you shop and ask them to use recyclable packaging or take it back.
- Purchase food in bulk and bring your own reusable produce bags and containers. Many natural food stores allow you to bring your own containers. Don't put your produce in plastic bags.
- Refuse single-use plastic items. Carry reusable utensils, straws, coffee cups, and water bottles. If you order carryout food, make sure you tell them to "hold the plastics."
- Join the Sierra Club Zero Waste Team:
[sierraclub.org/Maryland/Montgomery-County](https://www.sierraclub.org/Maryland/Montgomery-County) or [Sierraclub.org/DC](https://www.sierraclub.org/DC)

Questions?

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<https://www.sierraclub.org/maryland/montgomery-county/lets-make-montgomery-county-zero-waste-community>

