



Beyond a Throwaway Culture: Focus on Plastics

July 30, 2024



Beyond a Throwaway Culture: Focus on Plastics

RECORDING

The webinar is being recorded and a link to the recording will be sent to everyone who registered within the next 24-48 hours.

Questions

Please submit your questions in the Q/A box.

Chat

Please remember to be respectful and civil in all Chat interactions.

OPENING PRAYER

Scripture tells us that “creation waits with eager longing for the children of God to be revealed.”

Creation is waiting for us.

To open our eyes to the devastation in our world.

To put the needs of the most vulnerable above the greed of the powerful.

To move from doing what is easy to doing what is necessary and right.

To prioritize the needs of community over the convenience of self.

Creation is waiting for us.

To remove the pollution from our seas, land, air, bodies and hearts.

In all these things and more, creation waits for us to assume our roles as its servants and protectors.

With God’s help, we will answer creation’s call. Amen.

-From [Plastic Jesus: Real Faith in a Synthetic World](#), Creation Justice Ministries

Beyond a Throwaway Culture: Focus on Plastics



Healing Our Throwaway Culture:
Focus on Plastics



<https://catholicclimatecovenant.org/programs/earth-day/>

Beyond a Throwaway Culture: Focus on Plastics



Shamyra Lavigne-Davey
Rise St. James-Louisiana



Aidan Charron
EarthDay.org

Moderator: Paz Artaza-Regan, Catholic Climate Covenant

There Is No Justice Without Environmental Justice

RISE St. James, is a faith-based, grassroots, nonprofit organization fighting for clean air and water as well as the eradication and expansion of petrochemical industries in St. James Parish.



Presented by:
Shamyra Lavigne-Davey
Executive Assistant, Rise St.
James

A Massive Injustice: Cancer Alley

- 85-mile stretch of road along the Mississippi River from Baton Rouge, LA to New Orleans, LA
- 180+ petrochemical facilities
- 4th and 5th district predominately Black where industries are located
- Cancer risks are more than 700 times the national average

St. James Parish Population:

- 49.36% Black or African American residents
- 48.72% White residents

According to Neilsberg Research (August 2023)



Sharon Lavigne, Founder/Director, RISE St. James

**When one
woman became
fed up...**



Photo credit: <https://www.nd.edu/stories/the-fighter/>

Health Risks of Formosa Plastics Toxic Air Pollutants

- Ethylene Oxide
 - Linked to breast cancer,
 - Non-Hodgkin lymphoma
 - Lymphocytic leukemia
- Benzene
 - Known cause of leukemia
 - May cause lung cancer and lymphoma
 - Damages lungs, heart, liver, and blood cells
- Formaldehyde
 - Known cause of throat cancer and leukemia
 - May cause nose and sinus cancer

FORMOSA PERMITTED EMISSIONS	
POLLUTANT	TONS PER YEAR
ACETALDEHYDE	18
BENZENE	37
1,3-BUTADIENE	24
ETHYLENE OXIDE	8
FORMALDEHYDE	9

FORMOSA'S BAD TRACK RECORD

In June 2019, a federal judge in Texas declared Formosa a "serial offender" for dumping plastic pellets into Texas waterways for years. Formosa paid \$50M in a Clean Water Act settlement.

In 2016, Formosa polluted 125 miles of Vietnam's coastline. The toxic waste killed over 100 tons of fish and destroyed the economies of four coastal provinces.

The Fight Continues...



The screenshot shows the top portion of a mobile news article from The New York Times. At the top left is a hamburger menu icon, followed by the newspaper's name "The New York Times" in a serif font, and a user profile icon on the right. Below the header is a subscription prompt: "SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1/WEEK". The main headline is in a large, bold, italicized serif font: "In 'Cancer Alley,' Judge Blocks Huge Petrochemical Plant". Below the headline is a short introductory paragraph: "The company, an affiliate of Formosa Plastics, said it intended to move forward with the \$9.4 billion complex in St. James Parish despite the ruling." At the bottom of the article preview are three interactive buttons: "Give this article" with a gift icon, a share icon, and "Read in app" with a bookmark icon.

Menu icon

The New York Times

Profile icon

SUBSCRIBE FOR \$1/WEEK

In 'Cancer Alley,' Judge Blocks Huge Petrochemical Plant

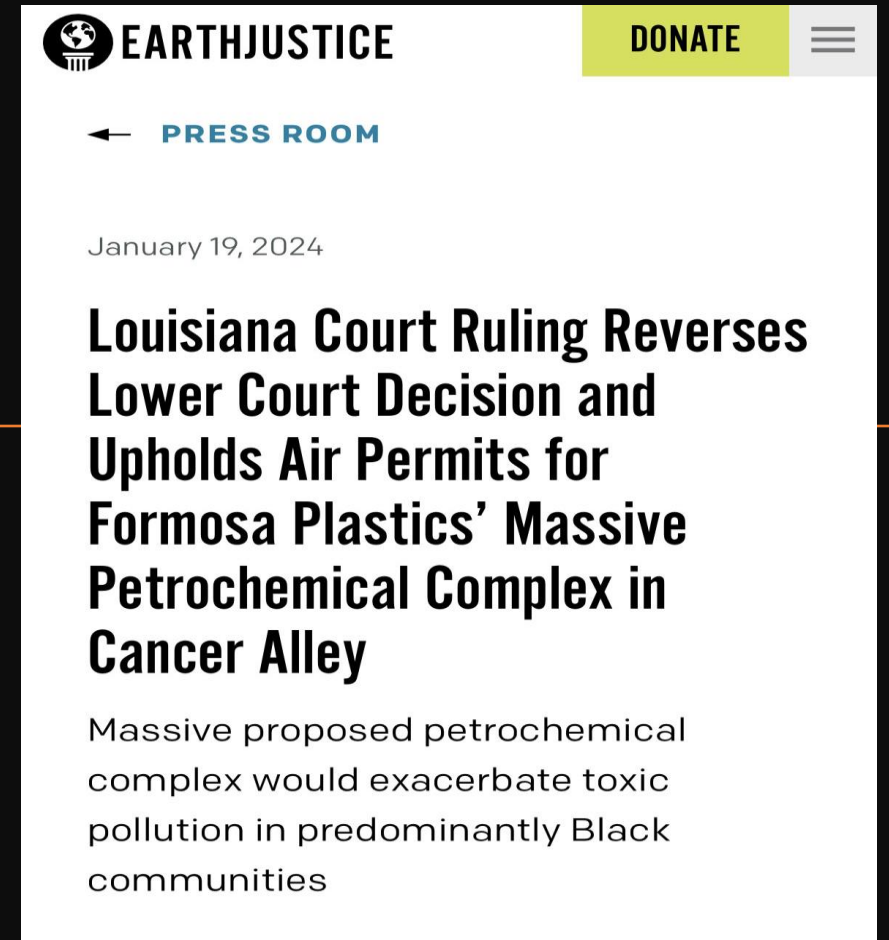
The company, an affiliate of Formosa Plastics, said it intended to move forward with the \$9.4 billion complex in St. James Parish despite the ruling.

Give this article

Share icon

Read in app

Credit: The New York Times



The screenshot shows a mobile page from Earthjustice. At the top left is the Earthjustice logo (a globe with a scale) and the word "EARTHJUSTICE" in a bold, sans-serif font. To the right is a yellow "DONATE" button and a hamburger menu icon. Below the header is a blue "PRESS ROOM" link with a left-pointing arrow. The date "January 19, 2024" is displayed in a smaller font. The main headline is in a large, bold, black sans-serif font: "Louisiana Court Ruling Reverses Lower Court Decision and Upholds Air Permits for Formosa Plastics' Massive Petrochemical Complex in Cancer Alley". Below the headline is a short introductory paragraph: "Massive proposed petrochemical complex would exacerbate toxic pollution in predominantly Black communities".

EARTHJUSTICE

DONATE

Menu icon

← PRESS ROOM

January 19, 2024

Louisiana Court Ruling Reverses Lower Court Decision and Upholds Air Permits for Formosa Plastics' Massive Petrochemical Complex in Cancer Alley

Massive proposed petrochemical complex would exacerbate toxic pollution in predominantly Black communities

Credit: Earthjustice

Tell President Biden: Revoke Formosa Plastics' permits today!

- Scan the QR code to stand with us and sign the petition to urge President Biden to revoke Formosa Plastics' permits.



Enough is Enough!



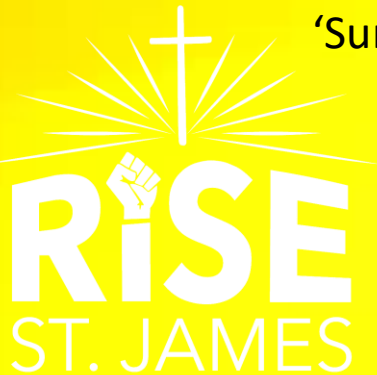
Tell Citi: Say 'NO' to investing in Environmental Racism!

DID YOU KNOW CITI IS THE WORLD'S SECOND LARGEST FUNDER OF FOSSIL FUEL PROJECTS?

Please visit:

[Risestjames.org/citigrouppetition](https://risestjames.org/citigrouppetition)

To sign the petition to demand Citi denounce and divest Formosa Plastics' toxic and racist 'Sunshine Project' in St. James, LA.





Learn more about the work of Rise St. James

Website: <https://www.risestjames.org/>

Instagram: @risestjames

Facebook: RISE St. James





Planet vs. Plastics

Aidan Charron, Director of End Plastic Initiatives at [EARTHDAY.ORG](https://www.earthday.org)

History of Earth Day I

Decades before the first Earth day, air pollution was considered “smell of prosperity”

Rachel Carson published New York Times bestseller Silent Spring in 1962, highlighting and raising public awareness and concern for living organisms, the environment, and links between pollution and public health

Come 1969 and Senator Gaylord Nelson, the junior senator from Wisconsin



History of Earth Day II

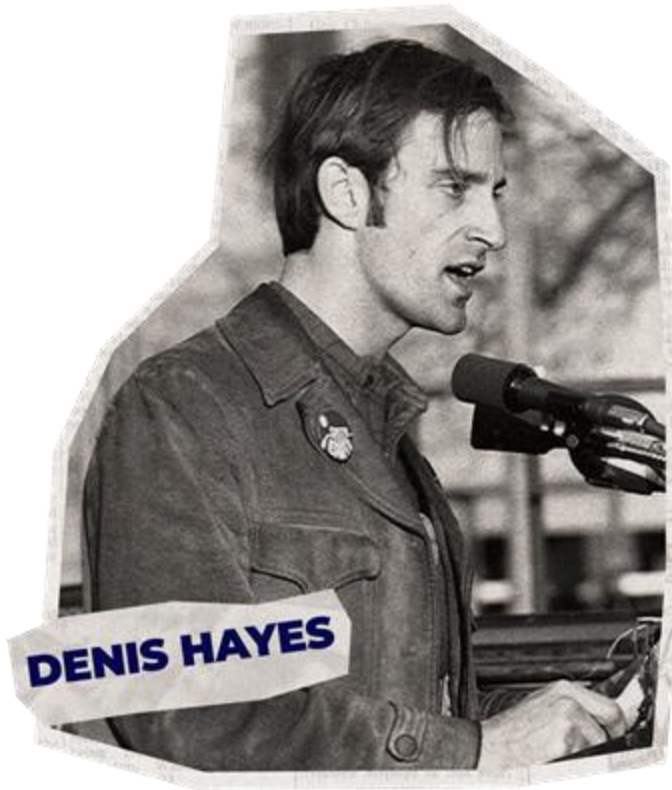
Senator Nelson, concerned with long deteriorating environment in the United States, along with many other witnessed a massive oil spill in January 1969

Using the momentum gathered by the anti-war movement and the public consciousness around air and water pollution Senator Nelson announced the idea for a teach-in on college campuses.

With Pete McCloskey, a conservation-minded Republican Congressman serving as his co-chair



History of Earth Day III



Along comes Denis Hayes, young activist who was tapped to organize campus teach-ins and to scale idea to a broader public.

Hayes built a national staff of 85 to promote events across the United States, changed the name to Earth Day and inspired 20 million Americans, 10% of the population to take to the streets, parks, and auditoriums.

Since April 22, 1970 Earth Day has grown into an international movement!

Earth Day Today

Today Earth Day is recognized the world over and for 2024 we have chosen the theme “Planet vs. Plastics”

We are making some main calls to action:

- 60 X 40
- Health Risks
- Demand Change
- Innovative Solutions



History of Plastics



1907 - Leo Baekeland's search for a cable insulator

He invented Bakelite, made up from Phenol and Formaldehyde

It was hard, infusible, and "chemically resistant"

History of Plastics

Different types of plastic soon began to follow

Plastic production during WWII shot up 300% with the advent of different qualities such as softness, durability, rigidity, etc.

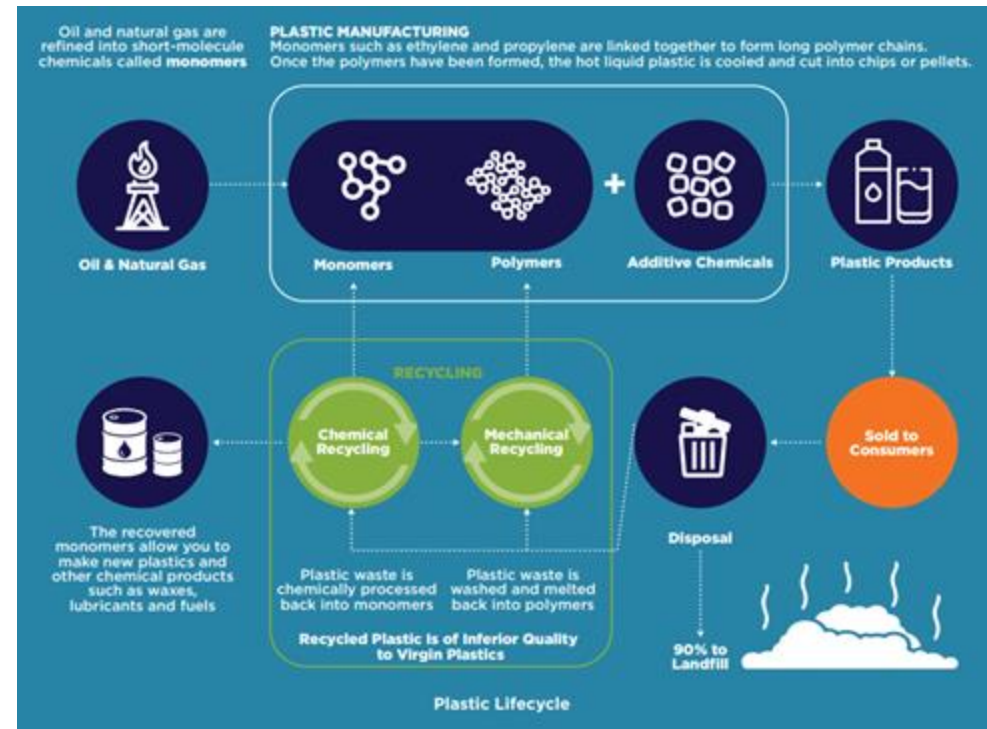
All of this made possible by additive chemicals!

Plastics and the Petrochemical Industry

The vast majority of plastics today are made from petroleum, in fact over 99%

“Forever chemicals” are introduced such as PFAS and BPA

There are over 16,000 chemicals, 4,200 of those are considered to be high dangerous, majority of the others have not been studied

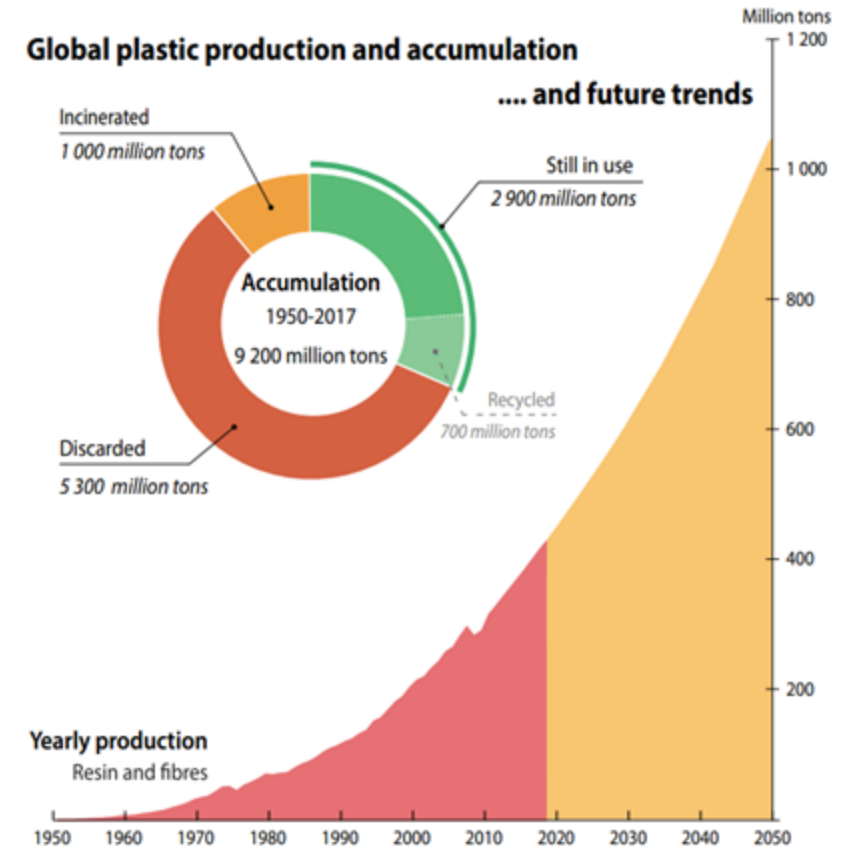


Plastics and the Petrochemical Industry II

Between 1961 and 1980 only 47 studies were done to assess human health effects of plastic and their additive chemicals

Global Plastic Production has doubled in the last 20 years alone, and is only expected to rise

Why the sharp increase?



Why our attention to plastic today

The Global Plastics Treaty

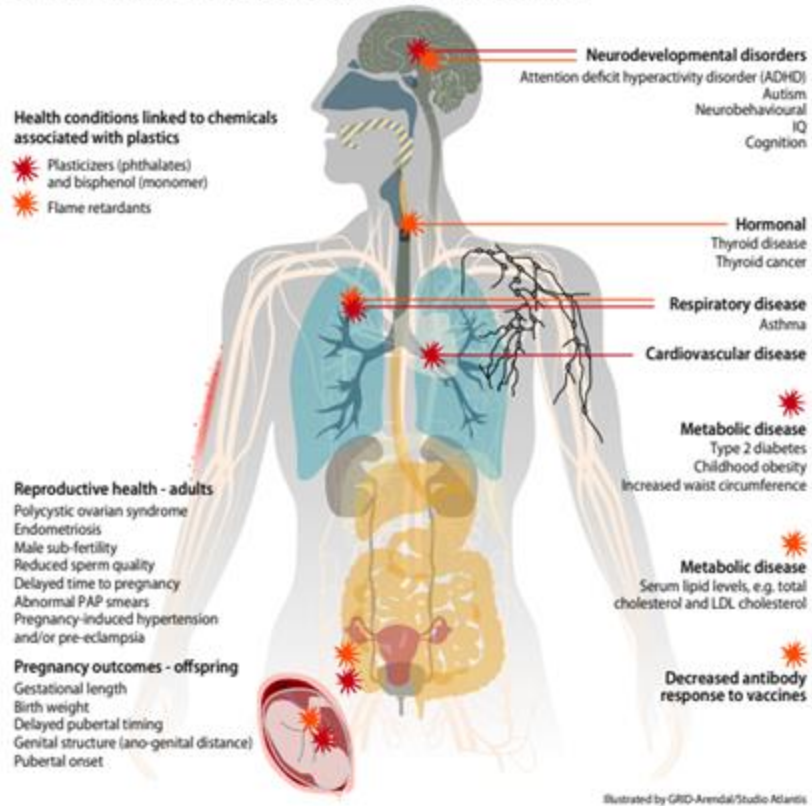
Increased evidence of the health effects

People waking up to the dangers and lies perpetuated by the petrochemical industry



The Endocrine System

Human health impacts of exposure to plastic-associated chemicals



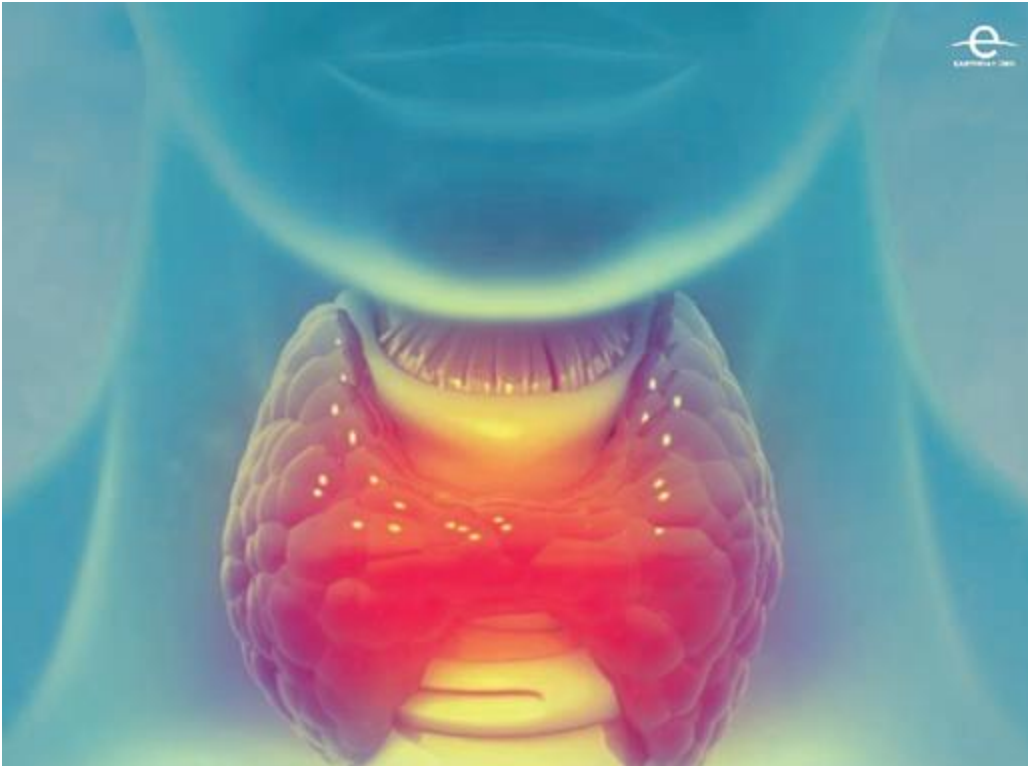
United Nations Environment Programme (2021). From Pollution to Solution: A global assessment of marine litter and plastic pollution. Nairobi.

Interconnectedness throughout

Hormones are more important than most realize!

Related to whole host of health issues

The Endocrine System



Related diseases from disruption

BPA and why its complicated, cannot control!

Learning Difficulties

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Constant Exposure



Dementia

University of Rhode Island Study

Bioaccumulation



Fertility Rates



Decrease in male fertility

Sperm Effectiveness

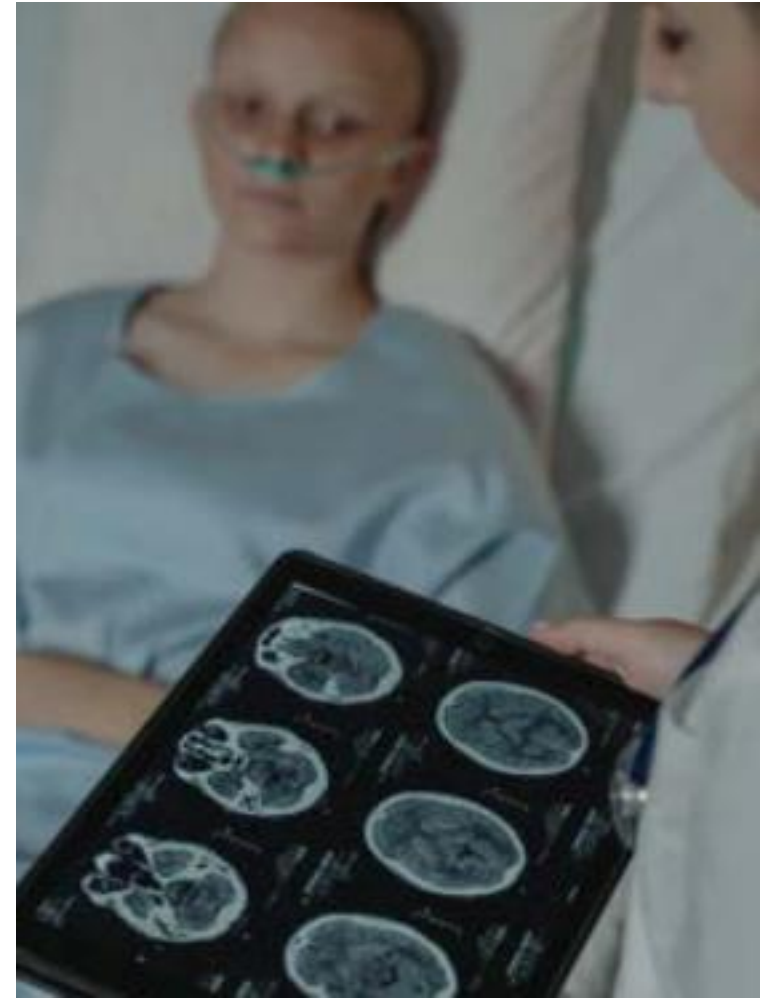
Not just a human issue

Cancers

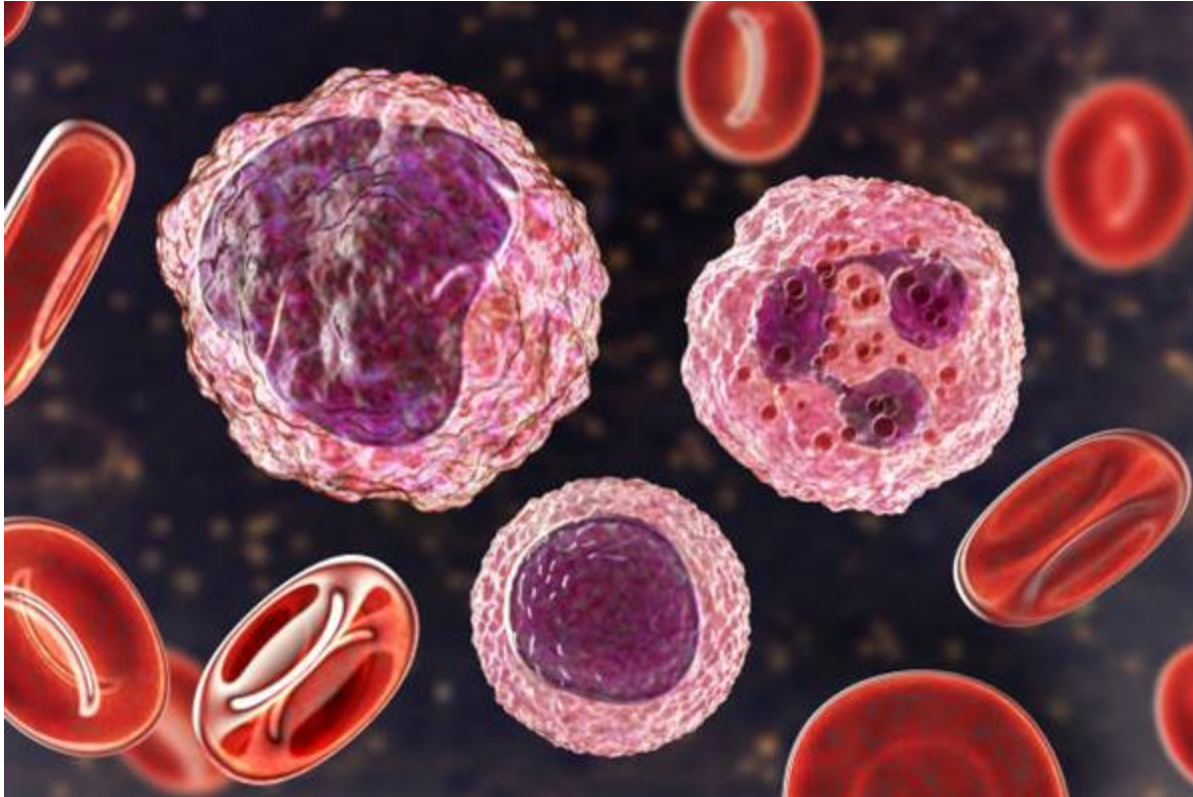
Pediatric cancer

Phthalate exposure

Related to endocrine disruption in many cases



Degradation of Lymphocytes



DNA degradation

Outside invaders

Gene expression

Babies vs. Plastics

We released the “Babies vs. Plastics” in November of 2023

Exposing what the plastics industry is doing to our children

Microplastics or MPs are everywhere

Babies vs. Plastics

MPs bioaccumulate in our major organs

Detection in human placenta and breast milk

What are some of the associated issues?



So why the concentration on babies?

More likely to be exposed to toxins

More tactile with their environment than adults

We need everyone involved!

The Precautionary Principle

We need to push for it across all legislation related to plastics!



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What you can do

Plastic audit

Change in clothing

Reuse, reuse, reuse

Push for local legislation



Happy Earth Day!

**Any additional questions - feel free to reach out
charron@earthday.org**

For More Information

<http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/>

Or email us at info@catholicclimatecovenant.org