

## Seven products that harm the environment

*Many everyday items that we take for granted have a significant impact on Mother Earth. Here are a few household products that hurt the environment more than you'd expect:*

### 1. Tea bags



An average tea drinker consuming 5 cups of tea a day using tea bags gets through about 13 sq m of perforated paper every year! According to a report by *which? Gardening*, teabags produced by the some of the top tea manufacturers including, *Twinnings* and *Tetley*, are only 75% biodegradable. While most teabags are made with paper fibre, they also include plastic polypropylene — an ingredient that makes teabags heat-resistant but is not fully biodegradable. Luxurious silken (basically plastic) tea bags are even more harmful as they contribute to landfill waste.

### 2. Anti-bacterial soap

Most anti-bacterial liquid soaps and body washes include an ingredient called triclosan. Research shows that small quantities of triclosan persist after being flushed down the drain and even after water is treated at sewage plants. They end up in water bodies and can disrupt algae's ability to perform photosynthesis and also build up in fatty tissues of animals higher up in the food chain.

### 3. Lawn mowers

Mowing the lawn is actually bad for the environment. As per a Swedish study, a lawn mower produces nearly the same amount of oily air pollution as a 100-mile car trip. According to the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), people can reduce the impact it has by using lawn equipment in the early morning or in the late afternoon.

### 4. Plastic bottles

About 50 billion bottles of water are consumed every year, 30 million in the US alone. A huge quantity of oil is used every year to produce these bottles. Moreover, the US recycle rate for PETs, or bottles made with polyethylene terephthalate, is only 23% - which means 80% of plastic water bottles end up in landfills. Also, not all plastic bottles placed in designated containers are recycled because only certain types of plastic can be recycled.

## 5. Paper cups



If you think your morning paper cup of coffee is recyclable and environmentally friendly, think again. These cups are also coated with low-density, heat-resistant polyethylene that is not biodegradable. In addition to these cups heading for a landfill and taking more than 20 years to decompose, the very process of making them is extremely harmful to the environment. Production consumes forests and large volumes of water, and expels dirty water.

## 6. Microbeads

Found in everything from toothpaste to exfoliating face washes and body scrubs, microbeads actually wreak havoc on the environment. According to a recent study by the Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies at James Cook University, these tiny pieces of plastic find their way down our drains to the ocean. Soaking up toxins like a sponge, they then contribute to the plastic pollution of water bodies negatively affecting marine organisms.

## 7. Disposable razors

According to the EPA, about 2 billion razors are thrown away every year. Although you can recycle the steel blades, your disposable razor most likely makes its way to the landfill. Add that to the higher environmental cost of production using raw materials and the water used while actually shaving and you've got one of the most wasteful bathroom products around.

**Source:** [www.globalpost.com](http://www.globalpost.com)