

City of
Gainesville

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Zero Waste Subcommittee
Information on Glitter & Plastic Confetti
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Is Glitter Litter?



Why is Glitter a Problem?

- Most glitter products are made a combination of aluminum and plastic, which contributes to the growing problem of **microplastics** in the environment.
- Microplastics are very small pieces of plastic, typically smaller than 5mm, that pollute the environment. They accumulate in animals, including fish and shellfish, and can harm the fertility, growth, and survival of marine life and other species.
- Small microplastic particles can be eaten by zooplankton, tiny marine animals that underpin the marine food chain and play an important role in regulating the global climate.
- Humans can also consume or inhale microplastics. The impact on human health is largely unknown and the subject of continuing research.

Is Glitter Litter?

What are the common sources of Glitter?

- Boat and customer car owners (glitter paint used on the outside of these vehicles)
- Football helmets, credit cards, and jet ski
- Cosmetics and body paint (music festivals)
- Craft projects, greeting cards, decorations



Is Glitter Litter?

The goal is to prevent glitter from getting into the environment via waterways



Glitter Bans?

- Unable to find any government that has specifically banned glitter
- The Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015 prohibits the manufacturing, packaging, and distribution of rinse-off cosmetics (soaps, body scrubs & toothpaste) containing plastic microbeads.
- Some individual retailers have voluntarily stopped selling glitter
- Some music festivals are not longer allowing guest to bring or wear glitter

Is Glitter Litter?



Glitter Alternatives?

- Biodegradable glitter substitutes do exist (but not many) and the terms "eco" and "biodegradable" are not strictly regulated
- Biodegradable glitter can still be coated with plastic and produce "almost identical" effects to regular glitter on freshwater habitats
- True bio-glitter is based from plant cellulose derived from eucalyptus trees
- Edible glitter used on bakery items made of sugar, cornstarch, mica-based pigments and other ingredients

Plastic Confetti

What is Plastic Confetti?

- Microplastics much like glitter
- Negative impacts of wildlife when it enters our environment
- Birds and other animals can mistake the little pieces for food



serpentine confetti



Plastic Confetti



What are the sources of Plastic Confetti?

- Weddings, graduations, parties and nightclubs
 - Photo prop
 - Confetti “Flick Sticks”
- ✓ Paper (degradable) alternative widely available



Plastic Confetti

What about internet
purchases?

Plastic Confetti Bans?

- **City of Mobile, AL** - Banned plastic confetti as of August 2018

Sec. 39-77. - Use, sale, etc., of confetti. It shall be unlawful and an offense against the city for any person to have in possession, keep, store, use, manufacture, sell, offer for sale, give away or handle any non-biodegradable, plastic-based confetti, serpentine, or other substance or matters similar thereto within the city or within its police jurisdiction. (Code 1965, § 41-3; Ord. No. 39-022-2018 , § 1, 8-7-18)

- **University of Alabama at Birmingham** - Resolution in Support of Banning Plastic Litter for Special Occasions
- **Malta** - Ban on balloons, confetti and plastic straws
- **Aruba** – Rolled into “single-use plastics” ban

Plastic Balloons

Single-use plastic?

Releasing of Balloons

- Similar issues as a plastic that gets ingested by wildlife.



THANK
YOU!

