



The pouch that packs your cooking oil and the bag you carry for shopping are made from the same material.

How can a plastic bag be harmful?

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**Do not litter.
Plastics are recyclable.**

Issued in public interest by Indian Centre for Plastics in the Environment.

Edible oil is an essential commodity which requires appropriate packaging to safeguard its quality over a period of time against being rancid due to the reaction with atmospheric oxygen and other gases. Plastics pouches have proven to be most efficient and cost effective solution to provide safe and unadulterated oil to the consumers. Plastics pouch save energy, water and fuel consumption and emissions of various volatile organic compounds (VOC) during manufacturing and subsequent transportation, compared to the alternate mode of packaging. Polyethylene which is absolutely safe in terms of its use in contact with ready to eat or drink food products is the predominant plastics material used for manufacturing these edible oil pouches.

Normal plastic carry bags are made of the same material which is used in manufacturing Edible Oil Pouch – Polyethylene. The attributes, which have made the use of plastics pouch safe, exists for carry bags also. Still it is alleged that Plastics carry bags are not environment friendly. Consider these facts revealed by Life Cycle Impact Studies conducted by credible International Organisations:

- Normal plastic carry bags consume only about 35% of energy compared to that required for manufacturing paper and compostable plastic carry bags.
- The weight of equivalent paper bags is 9 times more than plastic carry bags, which necessitates 10 times more transportation trips for paper bags consuming more fuel and thus causing more environmental pollution.
- Millions of trees would have to be cut every year to manufacture paper carry bags, if normal plastic carry bags are banned.
- Normal plastic carry bags manufacturing process consume only about 5% fresh water compared to that of paper or compostable plastic bags. In real terms, this saving can meet the drinking water requirement of millions of people.
- Plastic bags generate 60% less Green House Gas (GHG) Emission than uncomposted paper bags and 79% less GHG Emissions than composted paper bags. The saving is much more when the comparison is made with compostable plastic or jute bags.
- Plastics bags are recyclable. Paper bags also are recyclable; however it takes 91% more energy for recycling equivalent weight of paper than that of plastics. Compostable or jute bags are not recyclable.
- Paper bags generate 70% more air pollutants and 50% more water pollutants than normal plastic bags do during manufacture.
- Energy Saving during manufacture of raw materials, production and transportation of plastic bags compared to jute bags is 81%.
- Environmental Burden with respect to Air and Water pollution during Production of Raw Material and Bags for Plastic Bags is much less than that created by Jute bags.

Our poor littering habits coupled with inadequate infrastructure for waste management has created the disposal problem of solid waste, including the plastic waste especially in the urban areas. Discontinuation of Plastic bags is no solution and will rather multiply the problem many fold. This will add to the woes of common man as the so called alternatives are unviable, costly and place greater burden on the environment. The challenge facing us is to improve the solid waste management system and create awareness among general mass against littering.

The solution lies in Segregation of Waste at Source and arrangement for Recycling of all recyclable waste. Plastics Bags are 100% recyclable. Plastics Bags are Environment friendly.