

TURNAROUND FILMS

Looking for Microplastic in Our Oceans

**Microplastics are in our water.
How did they get there?**

Yes, plastics are forever and now they are everywhere.

Rain washes plastic trash off of our streets into catch basins where it is carried, untreated, into rivers and on to the ocean. Along the way, the plastics break down into smaller and smaller pieces, eventually becoming what scientists call microplastics. The amount of microplastic in sea water is increasing everywhere in the world. They are found in the bellies of marine birds and fish, impacting their ability to reproduce and grow. Scientists are starting to find even smaller plastics, called nanoplastics, in the blood and lungs of humans. We don't know yet what their impacts are on human health.

Hanna Mogensen, a Master's Student at the University of New Hampshire, is studying how plastics move from the streets to the water. Over the course of several months, she has been collecting water samples from outgoing tides in the Hampton Seabrook Estuary. Looking at these samples under a microscope helps her analyze how rising tides can pick up plastics and move them into the estuary. As the climate warms, increasingly severe storms are washing more plastic into the sea. Hanna's research may help understand where it comes from.

Watch *Looking for Microplastics* and other environmental/climate change films on turnaround-films.com

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The plastic pieces above did not sink to the bottom of the ocean nor did they become microplastics because they washed up on a beach in Massachusetts. Eventually a wave would have swept them back into the churning water, grinding them down into smaller and smaller microplastic.

Can you find the following items?

- Howard Johnson's Coffee Stir Stick
- Plastic Fork
- Computer Key
- Doll Hand
- Lego Piece
- Shirt Clip
- Teddy Bear
- Squid
- Guitar Pic
- Toy Wheel
- Parrot Charm
- Beads
- Push Pin

