

Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle

EARTH DAY 2021



REDUCE
REUSE
RECYCLE



The 3'R's



Earth Day 2021- Senator Gianaris

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An interest in the way ocean currents move led Dr. Erik van Sebille to track garbage. This butch scientist hopes that by making us aware of how much we litter our oceans, we'll be motivated to better stash our trash.

How did you get interested in garbage?

I studied how water moves through the world's oceans, and how our oceans are connected. I started working on garbage when I realized that the **buoys** I was using for my work drift just like plastic garbage. And I started my website, adrift.omg.org, because people asked me where that garbage would end up. I thought that an interactive online map would be a great way to show them.

Where does the garbage in our oceans come from?

It can come from litter people leave behind on beaches. Or from things falling off ships. Almost every river in the world flows into the ocean, so river garbage will end up in the ocean too. Plastic garbage is the biggest problem, though. That's because it doesn't easily break down. It can stay the ocean for thousands of years. Eventually, it arrives at the garbage patches.

Can you explain what garbage patches are?

The ocean is full of currents, and plastic garbage floats along with them. There are places where the water sinks down to about 500 feet, like a very slow drain. It then flows on, welling up again to the surface. Plastic garbage is too **buoyant** to sink with the water, so it stays behind-like a turd that won't flush. This is how you get garbage patches. They occur in those places where the water sinks. There are five garbage patches, one in each of the ocean basins. Each one is easily the size of the state of Texas. The most famous one is in the North Pacific, roughly between California