

ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

Plastic Pollution Solutions



Plastic production is expected to quadruple by 2050, compounding waste levels and climate effects. By raising awareness, modeling reusable behaviors on TV, and greening sets (both on and off screen), entertainment can play a pivotal role in helping audiences envision a world free from single-use plastics and their impacts on people and the planet.



ON SCREEN

The Media Impact Project in collaboration with Plastic Pollution Coalition conducted a content analysis to measure the prevalence of single-use plastic and reusable items in popular scripted television shows. They analyzed 64 episodes of 32 popular shows from the 2019-2020 season.

- Scripted TV featured an average of 28 single-use plastic items per episode.
- 93% of single-use items (both plastic and non-plastic) were not disposed of on screen. When disposal was shown, the items were most likely to be littered (80% of disposed items).

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- Only 8 episodes (13% of the sample) included any dialogue about plastic pollution or related issues. And they observed no dialogue related to systemic solutions to plastic pollution.
- Single-use plastic items far outweighed their reusable counterparts, including straws, beverage bottles, and coffee cups.

Solutions

- Allow characters to be plastic-conscious. Storylines and dialogue are not the only way to show this. Character traits can be subtle ways to show both awareness and solutions to the plastic problem.
- Swap out single-use plastics for package-free or non-plastic reusable items where feasible.
- Avoid replacing single-use plastics with bioplastics, as many bioplastics are also problematic.
- Show how plastic pollution is connected to human health issues, environmental justice, and the climate crisis.



What It Looks Like

Kat Cora, director of *Marry Me*, said that after reading the **Habits of Waste** initiative *Lights, Camera, Plastic?*, she made it a point to write reusables into the script, allowing stars like Jennifer Lopez (pictured) and Owen Wilson to bring their personal passions for reducing plastic to their fictional characters. [Find out more](#)



ON SET

- The Producers Guild of America Green Report states that studios spend \$11,175 on plastic water bottles per 60 day shoot. That amounts to 38,400 water bottles every 60 days! [Find out more](#)
- That \$11,175 budget for water is reduced 51% to \$5,489 when productions switch to water coolers and reusable bottles. (And a set with reusable bottles is nicer to look at.)
- Compostable dishware bought in bulk saves productions almost 6% and waste hauling expenses reduced by 5%. [Los Angeles Times](#)
- Or do away with disposable dishware altogether. Imagine a set where each person has their own plate and set of utensils. You can set up dishwashing stations and help nurture a cooperative team mentality. If you use a catering company, ask them to supply reusable plates and utensils.
- Crafty is one of the biggest producers of plastic waste. Buy in bulk. Get a giant bin of pretzels, a huge bowl, and a set of tongs.



Philadelphia-based Fishtown Films has been a zero waste production company since 2016. Later this year, they will be releasing their first full-length feature, *Citywide*, a production that generated only 16 oz. of trash during three years of filming.