

How Plastic Waste Harms the Environment

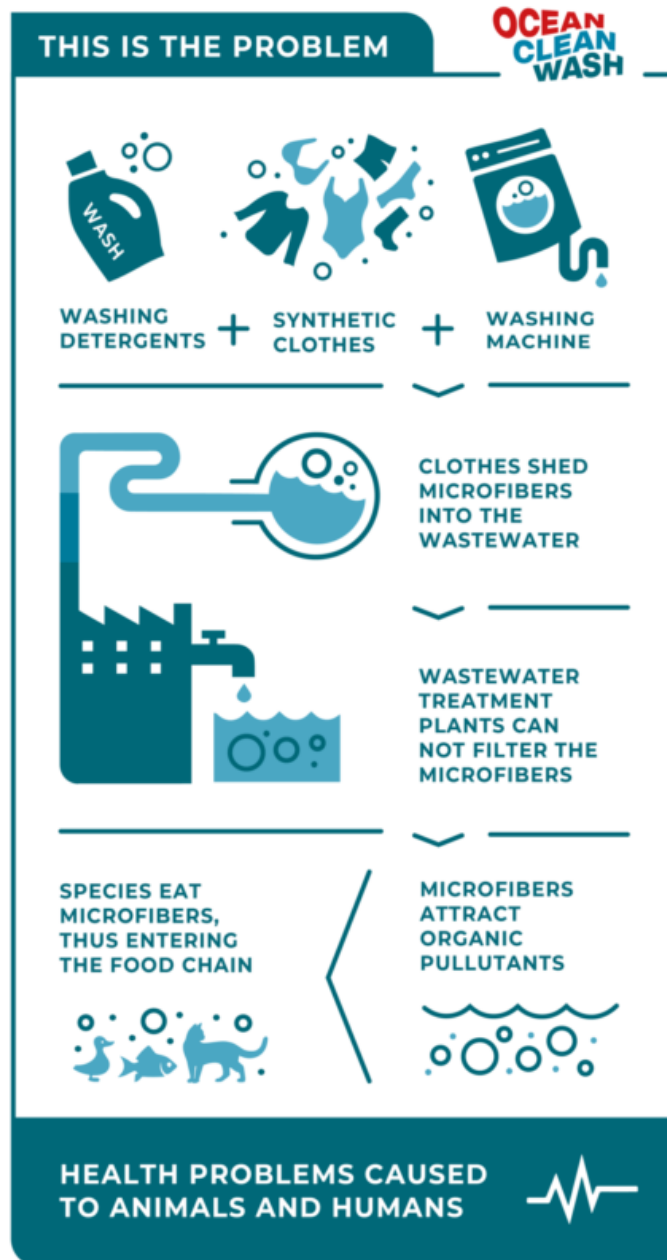
Eco360Jr
Backgrounder
Grade Level: 3-8



Introduction

When we wash the clothes we wear, tiny fibres (called microfibres) come off into the water in our washing machines. Many of these fibres are made of plastics (yes, a lot of our clothing is made of plastic!). These tiny fibres get washed down the drain and end up in rivers, lakes and even the Ocean. Microfibres can be so tiny that even phytoplankton, the microscopic organisms that create much of our planet's oxygen, eat them. And when phytoplankton are eaten by larger sea creatures, like fish, even *more* microfibres build up in these animals. Microfibres are microplastics so all sea creatures and sea birds end up eating plastic at some point in their lives. (Source: <https://www.oceancleanwash.org>)

See the infographic below:



(Source: www.oceancleanwash.org)