



We heart reuse.

May 2023

MRRA Spring Conference

Reuse & EPR



The Throw-Away Economy



10% of all wood harvested...



20% of all aluminum mined...



40% of all plastic created...



50% of all glass produced...

...is used to make single-use packaging.

70%

of street litter bound for local and coastal waterways is **disposable food & beverage packaging**

75% of top 10 littered items in Int'l Coastal Cleanup data are **food and beverage packaging**

2020 INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP

By the Numbers

Top Ten Items Recorded

1	Cigarette Butts	964,521
2	Beverage Bottles (plastic)	627,014
3	Food Wrappers (candy, chips, etc.)	573,534
4	Other Trash* (Clean Swell)	519,438
5	Bottle Caps (plastic)	409,855
6	Grocery Bags (plastic)	272,399
7	Straws, Stirrers	224,170
8	Take Out/Away Containers (plastic)	222,289
9	Beverage Cans	162,750
10	Beverage Bottles (glass)	146,255

221,589

People

5,229,065

Pounds

2,371,864

Kilograms

49,635

Miles

79,880

Kilometers

8,066,072

Total Items

A landscape of a landfill with dead trees and a dog. The ground is covered in a sea of plastic waste, with several dead, skeletal trees standing in the background. A dog is visible in the middle ground, walking through the trash. The sky is overcast and grey.

The problem isn't just single-use plastic.

It's "single-use" itself.

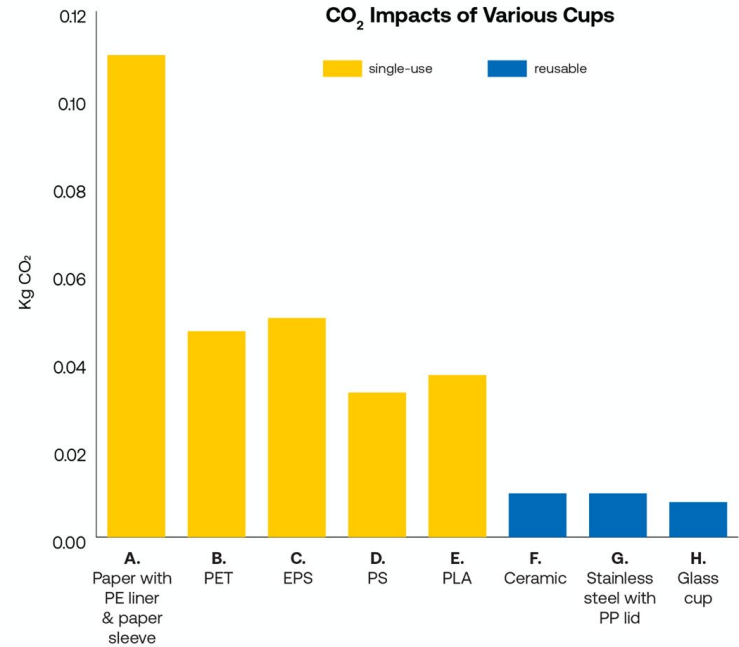
"We're never going to be able to recycle or compost our way to a sustainable future. We have to **work upstream to redesign the systems** generating all the waste in the first place."

– Upstream Founder Bill Sheehan, Ph.D.

Reuse: Better for our Climate

CO₂ Impacts – Cups

Disposable paper, plastic, and bioplastic = **3-10 x higher** than reusable ceramic, stainless steel and glass



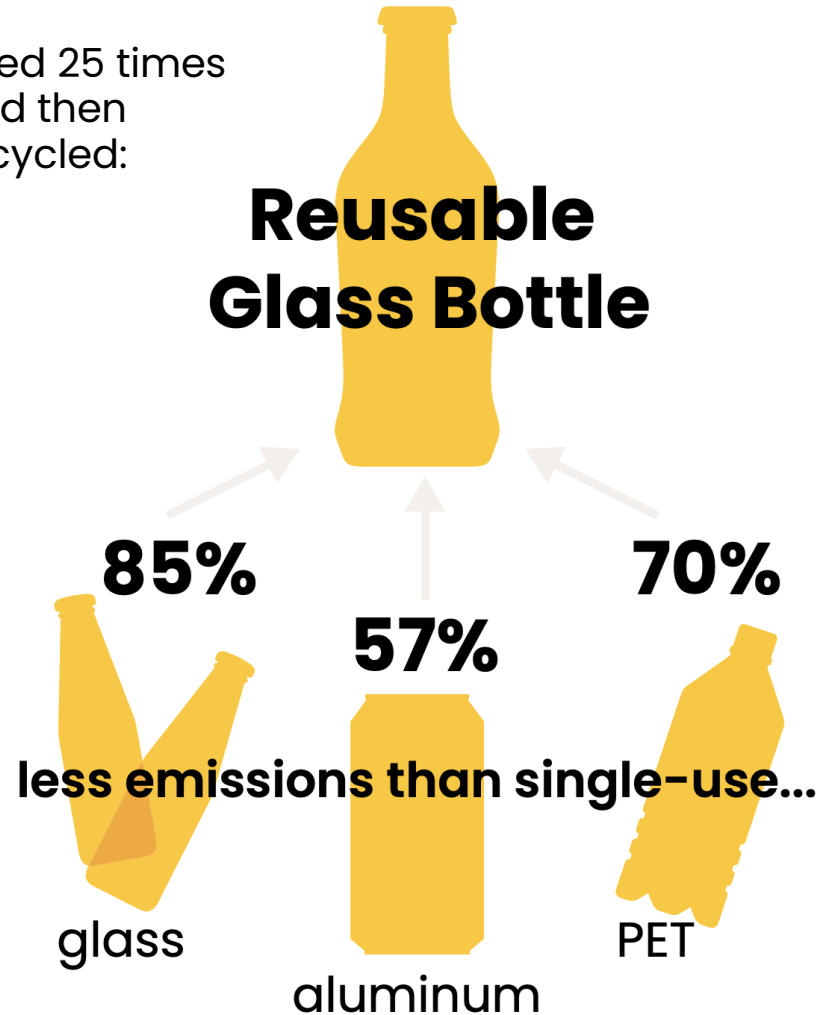
Third use: reusable glass bottles already less impactful than single-use glass, PET or aluminum cans.

Refillable PET bottles: save up to **40% of the raw materials and 50% of the greenhouse gas emissions** compared to production of single-use PET bottles.

Refillables also benefit the ocean: **10% increase in the share of bevq sold in refillables → 22% decrease in marine plastic pollution.** This would keep 4.5 to 7.6 billion plastic bottles out of the ocean each year.*

*Source: Oceana, [Just One Word: Refillables](#)

Used 25 times
and then
recycled:





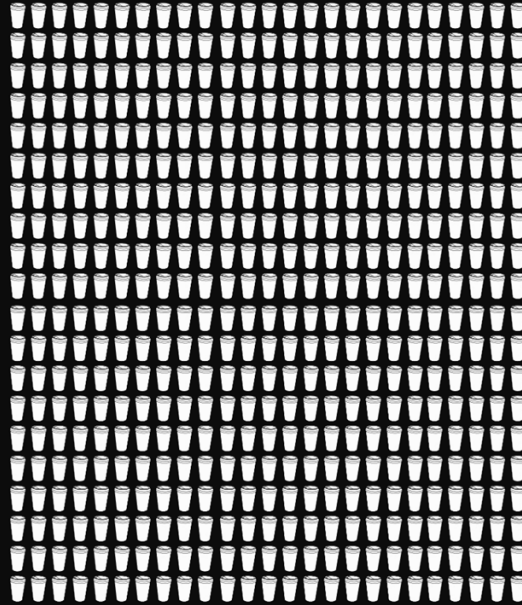
“I can’t meet our climate goals without reuse.”

– Miranda Helmer, Vice President of Innovation Discovery at The Clorox Company

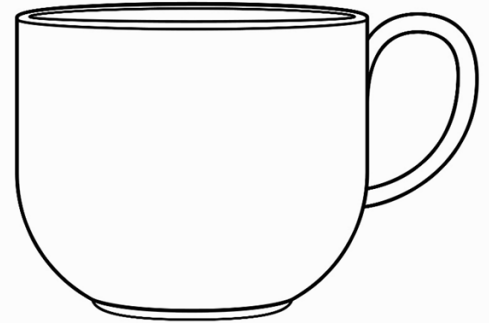
Less water!

- **Manufacture** of disposables requires water
 - extraction and processing
- **Reusable cups save water**
 - Most impact is in use phase

Using 500 paper cups consumes nearly 370 gallons water



Using and washing one ceramic cup 500 times consumes only 53 gallons of water.



Bottom Line: Reuse Wins

- **Reduces extraction & production**
- Less energy, land use, water and waste
- **Lower greenhouse gas emissions** than disposables - even recyclables and compostables.
- **Reduces overall pollution**, chemical exposure, and litter.
- **Creates good, green, local jobs.**



Upstream Vision

30% of consumable goods sold in reusable formats in the U.S. and Canada by 2030 – transforming the food service, beverage and consumer packaged goods sectors. **30 by 30.**

Making throw-away go away.



Foundations of the Reuse Movement: Local Policy & Action

Model Policies (Reduce/Reuse)

- Accessories-on-Request (“Skip the Stuff”)
- Reusables for Onsite Dining
- BYO (fees on disposables)
- Reuse at Events & Gov’t Facilities

Today in US & Canada:

70+ Reuse Laws

covering

90+ million people



Community-Scale Reuse

City-Led Initiatives - a few examples:

- **Public/Private Partnerships:** Seattle, Hilo, Galveston, Ann Arbor...
- **Grants & Incentives:** Boulder, Alameda...
- **Infrastructure & Systems Investments:** Durham, San Francisco...

Today in US & Canada:

20+ Reuse Coalitions

and counting - incl. **Portland/South Portland!**



Reuse Companies: Reenvisioning Packaging as a *Service*



EPR Momentum in the U.S.

2021: ME & OR

2022: CO & CA

2023: 30+ bills in 13 states, *MD awaiting Gov. signature*



Principles for Reuse/Refill in EPR and DRS

- 1. Institutionalize reuse through producer funding and financial incentives.**
- 2. Mandate and measure reuse.**
- 3. Enact DRS and EPR as complementary policies.**
- 4. Clearly define “reusable” packaging.**
- 5. Center justice and equity in process and content.**
- 6. Allow flexibility; avoid barriers to reuse.**



Reuse in US EPR Laws (so far...)

	ME	OR	CO	CA
<i>Producer funding & incentives</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Targets</i>	✓	✗	✗	✓
<i>Complementary to DRS</i>	✓	✓	✗	✓
<i>Definition/s</i>	✓	✓	✗	✓
<i>Justice & Equity</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<i>Flexibility</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓



Reuse in ME EPR

Confirmed (in statute):

- Incentives for reuse in **eco-modulated fees**
- Program **targets** for reuse (not enforceable)

Potential (via rules):

- **Reimbursements to municipalities for reuse investments**
- **Direct funding for reuse infrastructure & education**

→ ***WE NEED YOUR VOICES!***



Thank you!

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