



Microplastic Monday: Toxins

Plastic in the ocean acts as a magnet for harmful chemicals and toxins which may normally exist in dilute amounts. The surface of plastic debris in the marine environment tends to attract Persistent, Bioaccumulative and Toxic substances (PBT's), especially Persistent Organic Pollutants like DDT, dioxins, and PCB's. Plastic marine debris has been found with concentrations of PBT's at orders of magnitude higher than the surrounding seawater!

As fragmentation and weathering degrades plastics into smaller pieces, the surface area to volume ratio increases, which leads to especially **concentrated PBT levels in microplastics**. Unfortunately, microplastics are also very susceptible to consumption by marine organisms, which leads to a higher risk of **these chemical toxins accumulating through the food chain, and finding their way into our food**.

Challenge: Stop and pick up 5 pieces of litter today and dispose of it properly, to prevent the macroplastics you see from degrading into microplastics, and toxin magnets!

Photo Credit: [Association for Denman Island Marine Stewards](#)