

Planetary Wellbeing

Cut Pollution & Toxicity

- Cleaning & Laundry
- Green Carwash
- Low-Toxin Manufacturing
- Natural Garden & Lawn Care
- Organic & Sustainable Agriculture
- Pest Control
- Plant-Based Eating
- Zero Emissions
- Zero Toxin Parenting

Ensure Animal Wellness

Guard Water Resources

Ocean Awareness

Protect Biodiversity

Reduce Resource Consumption

Save Energy & Climate

Pretty in Pastels



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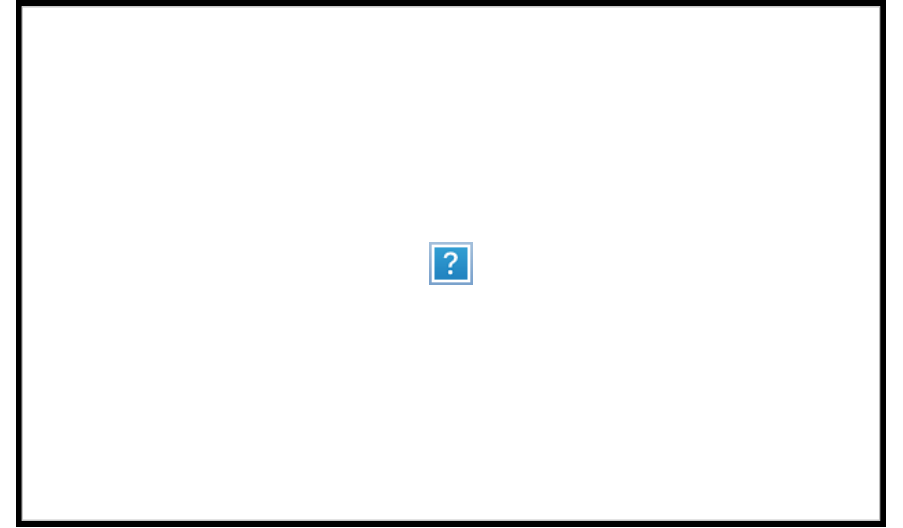


Your Choices Can Help Prevent Oil Spills

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Every day we use products that rely on oil. Whether we fill our vehicles with fuel, pack our lunches in reusable **plastic containers**, or wear polyester fashion, we support the exploration for, drilling of, and transportation of oil around our planet. Unfortunately, this also means we all must take some responsibility for marine oil spills when they happen. Even with all the safety procedures and equipment to protect the environment, oil spills still happen.

At Hearts, we want to be part of the movement that puts a stop to our dependence on oil so that oil spills become a thing of the past. We're doing that in part by lowering our dependence on petroleum products as much as possible by using recycled, upcycled, biodegradable, and raw components, and by offsetting our carbon footprint with [CarbonFund.org](#). But we want to do more, and we think we can do that by helping consumers like you take action to make oil spills history. We hope our lifestyle tips for how to help prevent oil spills make a difference in your life!



Quick Guide: Basic Eco Problems with Oil Spills

- **World still using oil for 30% of energy in 2030:** Scientists predict oil will still make up to 30% of the world's energy mix 2030. ^[i] ^[ii]

- **400+ million gallons spill into oceans every year:** Human activity results in oil spills into oceans in many ways: 37 million gallons from tankers and ships running aground, 360 million gallons as a byproduct of the use of automobiles and industrial waste from production. ^[iii]

- **1,000s of birds killed by oil spills:** The downy feathers of birds become coated with oil so it becomes impossible for them to fly or float (they frequently sink under water and drown). It also disrupts their feathers' insulating effect from the cold water and they freeze. Or they ingest the oil with its harmful chemicals (benzene, toluene, etc.), killing them by poisoning. ^[iv] Of the 4,768 dead animals gathered as of August 13 in the BP oil spill, 4,080 were birds and 525 were turtles. ^[v]

- **1,000s of marina mammals harmed by oil spills:** Like birds, mammals such as otters and seals are impacted by oil: it coats their fur preventing them from keeping warm and poisons them internally when they ingest it. The toxicity can cause long-term disruptions in reproductive processes and birth defects. ^[vi]

- **Oil dispersants cause cancer, kidney dysfunction, and respiratory illness:** Corexit 9500 and Corexit 9527 are the dispersants used to clean up the Gulf oil spill, approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), but they are banned in the UK because of their toxicity. These dispersants are linked to cancer, kidney disease, and respiratory irritation. ^[vii]

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Take Action! How Your Lifestyle Can Help to Prevent Oil Spills

1. **Reduce your use of fossil fuels:** Cut your energy consumption by choosing people-powered commutes or public transportation; making home energy retrofits to reduce heating and cooling costs; choosing energy efficient lighting; and [driving a fuel efficient vehicle](#).
2. **Install solar, wind, or geothermal to generate your own green energy:** Drastically reduce your support for the oil industry by putting renewable energy on your property with solar, geothermal, or wind. Check out the [US National Atlas](#) to find out what renewable energies would work best for you.
3. **Buy green electricity:** If you can't generate your own solar or wind power, purchase green electricity from your power provider. There are generally two options for this: *Green pricing options* in regulated power structures allow you to pay a premium to have your equivalent power usage pumped into the grid as renewable energy. Green marketing options, on the other hand, work in competitive electricity markets where 100% renewable energy providers can sell you their energy directly. Find out more about your local electricity grid and where you can buy green electricity via the [Environmental Defense Fund](#).
4. **Politically support clean energy instead of oil:** Join an organization fighting for more renewable energy in our nation's grid so that we can reduce our dependency on oil. You can support organizations like [Sierra Club](#), [Center for American Progress](#), [350.org](#), and others by volunteering or giving financially.

Dig Deeper: Oil Spill Incidents through History

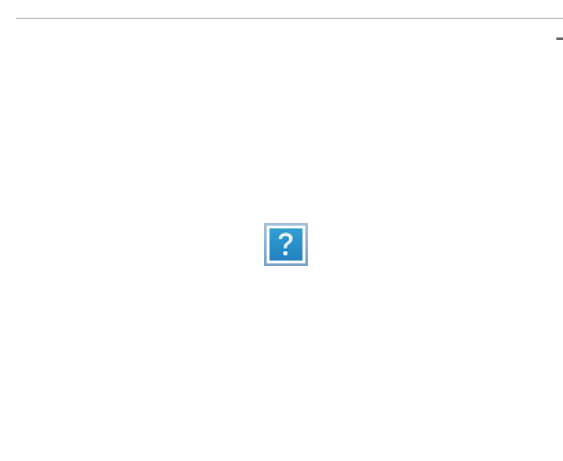
- Go below the surface of an oil spill to explore many more ways the oil harms our marine ecosystems with the NRDC's interactive [Disaster in the Gulf: Go Below the Surface of the Gulf Oil Disaster](#).
- Check out the [Largest Oil Spills](#).
- Discover more about the science of [oil-eating bacteria](#).
- Learn more about the [Spill in Bahia de Campeche, Mexico](#) where, in 1970, 140 million gallons of crude oil was spilled.
- Find out about the [Exxon Valdez Oil Spill](#) in 1989 when the supertanker ran aground in Alaska, spilling 11 million gallons of crude oil.
- Read about how different countries use energy and predictions for the future in [World energy outlook 2008](#) via the International Energy Agency.

+ References

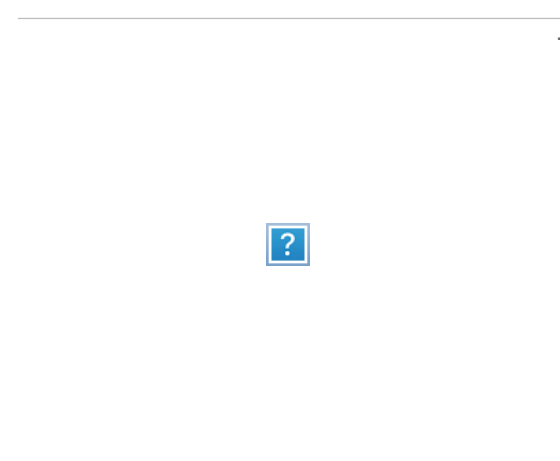
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