

BAN THE BEAD

Stop microplastics from entering our water!

Did you know that many commonly used personal care products contain tiny plastic exfoliating beads that are harmful to our environment? These particles known as **microbeads** are so small that they go down the drain and slip through water treatment plants. Because they are plastic, they never truly biodegrade and can be mistaken for food by a variety of marine life **right here in the Chesapeake Bay**. We need to stop the flow of plastics into our environment by banning **the creation and sale of consumer products containing microbeads**.

What's the Big Deal about Tiny Beads?

- Facial cleansers, soaps, and toothpaste contain thousands of microbeads.
- American consumers buy products containing **573,000 pounds** of microbeads per year.
- Once released into an ecosystem microbeads are difficult to remove and do not biodegrade.

Potential Risks to Public Health

- Micro plastics act like magnets for pollutants in the environment such as **DDT, PCBs, and industrial chemicals**.
- Marine mammals and fish have been found with microbeads in their bodies.
- Dentists have report finding microbeads from toothpaste embedded in patients' gums.



A single tube of facial cleanser can contain over 300,000 microbeads!

The Solution

- Natural alternatives to microbeads such as shells and salt crystals are readily available and affordable, making it feasible for manufacturers to discontinue their use!

A quick phase-out of microbeads is crucial.

What can you do?

- 1) Stop buying products that contain microbeads and educate your friends! Look for "polyethylene" on the ingredient list. When in doubt avoid scrubbing beads altogether.
- 2) Support legislation **HB216** and **SB200** with amendments to ban **ALL forms of plastic** including so-called "biodegradable" plastics from personal care products.

For more information and product lists visit
www.beatthemicrobead.org

