



HARTLEY DODGE MEMORIAL BUILDING
BOROUGH OF MADISON, NJ

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**PLASTIC-FREE WEEK IN MADISON AIMS TO ENGAGE RESIDENTS
IN REDUCING POLLUTION FROM SINGLE-USE PLASTICS**

Madison, NJ – April 22, 2019 – The Madison Environmental Commission will be holding their first ever Plastic-Free Week from Saturday, April 27 to Saturday, May 4. The week includes giveaways as well as ideas for how to take action.

“We’re starting the week with a reusable bag giveaway at Stop & Shop and ending with a milkweed giveaway for residents who take our Plastic-Free Pledge,” says Claire Whitcomb, Chair of the Madison Environmental Commission.

The pledge, available online at <https://www.rosenet.org/1140/Plastic-Free-Week>, lists seven simple steps residents can take. Those steps include, but are not limited to utilizing reusable bags, skipping straws, saying no to Styrofoam, giving up bottled water, bringing a mug for take-out coffee, carrying cutlery and toting plastic containers for restaurant leftovers.

“Plastic-Free Week is meant to educate and inspire residents to take action,” says Maureen Byrne, Borough Council member and Madison Environmental Commission liaison. “Plastic pollution is a serious issue for our health and our water systems. Even bottled water contains microplastics,” continued Byrne.

Events that will take place during Plastic-Free Week include;

- A reusable bag giveaway at Stop & Shop (131 Main Street) on Saturday, April 27 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.
- Milkweed will be given away on two separate occasions for those who take the Plastic-Free Week Pledge. The giveaways will take place at Madison Library’s Green Fair on Saturday, April 27 from 1:00 to 3:00 pm as well as on Saturday, May 4 at May Day in Madison, 11:00 to 1:00 pm at Hartley Dodge Memorial.

Both giveaways will be on a first-come, first-serve basis during the allotted times, or until they have all been given out, whichever comes first.

Madison residents are also urged that they can bring their plastic bags to Stop & Shop to be recycled, as well as learn about everyday products that can help reduce single-use plastic consumption. Bags that are recycled at Stop & Shop are picked up by TREK and turned into decking, benches and other products.

As an effort to engage Madison businesses in Plastic-Free Week, a team of Madison Public School students, Christian Wong, Maya Sze, and Carissa Finnerty of Madison High School and Amelia Nevin of Torey J. Sabatini School, have visited all Madison restaurants to explain the benefits that come when someone skips the straw. "Plastic straws are not recyclable and they are a hazard for wildlife," explains Amelia Nevins. "Plastic-Free Week will help everyone understand how much plastic they really use," explained Nevin.

"I commend the Madison Environmental Commission for preparing what is going to be a very useful week in Madison, Plastic-Free Week," said Mayor Robert H. Conley. "Their efforts will, over the long term, help allow Madison residents and establishments learn the dangers that plastic has for our environment. I encourage you to take the Plastic-Free week pledge as we help keep Madison the environmentally friendly borough it is," continued Conley.

In addition to the students who visited Madison businesses, volunteers were out educating stores on a recent Madison Borough Resolution (R108-2019) which encourages the use of recyclable paper bags and reusable bags instead of plastic bags, and requests that all retail establishments train their employees to "Ask before bagging" to give shoppers an opportunity to save a bag.

"We have a huge cast involved in Plastic-Free Week," says Whitcomb. "This is an issue residents are passionate about."

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