

## Keep Dodge City Beautiful

We can lessen our environmental footprint by minimizing our use of plastic shopping bags. If we do so, our world will become a cleaner, safer place for all living things.

There is one simple act we all can take that will have an enormous impact on the health of our city and its residents.

The next time you shop, don't leave the store carrying a plastic bag. If everyone did this, one of the largest polluters would be removed from circulation!

Consider the following shocking facts about plastic shopping bags:

- Each year, an estimated 500 billion plastic bags are consumed world wide. That comes out to over one million per minute. Billions end up as litter each year.
- According to the EPA, over 380 billion plastic bags, sacks and wraps are consumed in the U.S. each year.
- Plastic bags don't biodegrade, they photodegrade-breaking down into smaller and smaller toxic bits contaminating soil and waterways and entering the food web when animals accidentally ingest.
- Americans throw away approximately 100 billion plastic bags per year.
  - Of those 100 billion plastic bags, only 1% are recycled
- In a landfill, plastic bags take up to 1,000 years to degrade. As litter, they breakdown into tiny bits, contaminating our soil and water.
- The production of plastic bags requires petroleum and often natural gas, both non-renewable resources that increase our dependency on foreign suppliers.
- Annual cost of plastic bag production to US retailers alone is estimated at \$4 billion.
  - When retailers give away free bags, their costs are passed on to consumers in the form of higher prices.

REDUCE, RE-USE, RECYCLE

