



## PET FIGHTS BACK

Most readers of PETPlanet have a connection with the PET value chain and rely on some aspect of PET for their livelihood.

Here are some questions. Do any or all of the following annoy you ...?

- Opening newspapers and magazines and reading misinformation such as cartons/PLA/etc are more natural and better than PET? Or being told that we shouldn't buy water bottled in PET because it harms the environment?
- Watching TV and seeing PET bottles as the background to reports on litter/rubbish/plastic waste/the environment?
- Lurid headlines of PET bottles carrying dangerous health risks when the study methodology and conclusions would be condemned by any lower school teacher?
- Exploitation of the units quoted? The worldwide publicity given to a study that found a substance present in parts per trillion (against the European Food Safety Authority's recent safe limit in parts per billion) should have provoked the positive reaction "Good, this is a thousand times less than the independently established safe limit".
- Ill-informed chain E-mails you receive linking PET bottles to life threatening diseases or even death? What caused these diseases before the advent of PET? DID YOU FORWARD THESE E-MAILS TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY?

This is our living that is under threat. Isn't it time that we in the PET industry reminded ourselves and others of the benefits of PET?

- PET is clean and lightweight. One litre (one kilogram) of water can be protected from contamination and spoiling by 25 grams of PET.
- Empty PET bottles can be recycled and are collected for recycle from households and drop off points in every EU country. In 2007 1.13m tonnes were collected for recycle, 20% more than in 2006. They end up in a variety of applications – new bottles, thermoforming sheet, strapping tape, fibres, non wovens and others such as engineering plastics.
- A PET bottle doesn't break or shatter. It is the safest material for all beverages in the home, at sports venues and outdoor concerts, and on the beach ..... but as with all packaging we must dispose of our bottles safely in a recycle or litter bin!
- When disasters strike PET really comes into its own. Pictures of natural, and not so natural disasters show aid and rescue workers handing out essential water in PET bottles. They are light, compact, resealable, easily transported to remote areas and are immediately available in large quantities with filling lines able to work round the clock to support emergency services.
- There are also many occasions when tap water becomes polluted or is not available and water companies have emergency bottled water stocks to take account of this.



- It isn't a sin to take a bottle of water with you when you're travelling, in fact it is a sensible practice. By all means reuse your PET bottle and refill it from a tap, but please treat it as you would a glass or a ceramic cup and wash the bottle well between uses.
- There are many myths about PET and its contents. The most recent one associated PET with environmental oestrogens. Considerable research has been conducted with no evidence of danger to reproduction or reproductive development from PET or any of its raw materials. PET and its raw materials are not made from phthalates. There may be some confusion because the name sounds similar to the very safe terephthalates and isophthalates, but these are very different substances.
- It is the fashion to talk about "carbon footprints". This doesn't consider the effect a product can have throughout its lifecycle on air and ground water quality, soil contamination and depletion of natural resources. PET has freely available, peer reviewed Life Cycle Analyses (LCAs) available for PET resin production and its conversion into containers or sheet ([www.plasticseurope.org](http://www.plasticseurope.org)). These are regularly reviewed. Petcore is planning, with EuPR and EPRO, to produce a companion LCA for the collection and recycle of PET bottles in Europe. Its availability will provide an independent challenge when comparative LCAs are published that conveniently leave the benefits of recycling PET out of their calculations.

We are sure that you will all be able to add to this list of benefits. Petcore is always willing to listen to and discuss any industry views and would also like to talk to politicians, media or other industry, academic or non governmental organisations before they publish articles or papers on PET.

Petcore will be more proactive with its communication. We shall help everyone in our industry to rebut inappropriate and negative claims about PET by providing facts and information in a simple form. We'll produce an information campaign in conjunction with other PET and plastics industry bodies and be prepared for an immediate reaction to poor science or sensationalist media reports.

The websites below will give up to date information and facts to help the PET industry defend and protect its products.

[www.petcore.org](http://www.petcore.org)  
[www.plasticseurope.org](http://www.plasticseurope.org)  
[www.forum-pet.de](http://www.forum-pet.de)  
[www.petresin.org](http://www.petresin.org)  
[www.napcor.com](http://www.napcor.com)

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