Sea Grant
Delaware

Microfibers Protect Our Waters

Microfibers are formed when microscopic fibrous particles break away from textile products like clothing, furniture and rope.

All fabrics shed fibers and domestic laundry is a widespread source of plastic microfiber emissions.

What's On Your Tag?

Natural Fabrics

Cotton
Linen
Silk
Wool

Cloth made from plants and animals. The fibers are not altered as they are spun into yarn or woven into material.

Semi-Synthetic Fabrics

Rayon
Viscose
Lyocell
Acetate
Modal

Composed of regenerated cellulose, fibers from plant pulp (e.g. bamboo) are dissolved in chemicals and extruded.

Synthetic Fabrics

Acrylic
Polyester
Spandex
Elastane
Nylon

Based on man-made polymers that usually come from by-products of petroleum. They are not biodegradable.

Scientists Found:

Microfibers are the most common type of microplastic in Delaware's tributaries and Inland Bays.

Polyester and Rayon fibers are most frequently documented.

Microfibers are found in the guts of some local seafood species.

Microfleece (polyester) **emits high volume plastic fibers.**

Wash with Wisdom:

When purchasing textiles, consider what the fabric is made of. Natural fabrics are biodegradable.

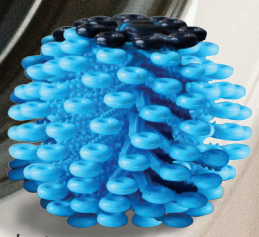
Use a fiber trapping device to minimize microfibers in laundry wastewater.

Wash synthetic fabrics less often.

Wise Washers Consider:

- ✓ Fabric Choices
- ✓ Fiber-Catching Products
- ✓ Wash Frequency

Collect fiber waste by using fiber-catching balls, mesh bags and in-line water filters in washing machine.



A typical ball product designed to capture tiny microfibers floating in laundry water.

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