

Prairie Fare: Are Plastics Harming Our Health?

By Julie Garden-Robinson, Food and Nutrition Specialist, NDSU Extension

“Have you been hearing about plastics, especially microplastics, lately?” I asked my husband. He spends a lot of time reading online, so he is often my gauge for column topics. I wondered what he had been seeing.

“Yes. Plastics are everywhere,” he said when he briefly looked up from his phone. He obviously was not very chatty that evening.

What he said was true. I continued reading for this column. I looked around our house, and plastics certainly are everywhere.

As I explored research articles, I was getting a bit alarmed about “microplastics” and “nanoplastics” in our environment.

Let’s take a step back in time and then consider what we can do to reduce the amount of microplastics in our food and environment.

I enjoy combing through antique stores. The implements from our ancestors’ era were made from natural materials. Decades ago, materials were made of wood, metal, glass and other nonplastic items.

However, I do not think we will ever give up the convenience of plastics.

Plastic has a long history dating back to 1869 when John Wesley Wyatt invented a substitute for ivory from elephants by combining natural cellulose (cotton fiber) with camphor to make a shapable material. Interestingly, the popularity of billiards prompted the discovery, according to the Science History Institute.

Later, another inventor, Leo Baekeland, created “Bakelite” in 1907 as the first synthetic “plastic” insulator for use in the electrical industry. Plastics then became part of the war effort in the 1940s.

Look around your space. Are you drinking from a plastic water bottle or wearing shoes that are part plastic? You might have a part-plastic cell phone at your side. Perhaps you drove a vehicle with plastic components. You might have a body or facial scrub with “microbeads” (plastic) in your shower. Plastic is part of tires and even clothing.

Most likely, if you are like me, you might have a plastic bag full of plastic bags in a closet. Everything from milk to laundry detergent is sold in plastic containers. We might bring our lunch in plastic containers or wrap our food in plastic wrap. Toys are often plastic.

As time has progressed, plastics have become pollutants, with plastic chairs showing up at the bottom of the oceans.

Researchers have been studying the potential detrimental effects of us inhaling or consuming microplastics. Microplastics are small particles (less than 5 millimeters) that are released as plastics break down. Nanoplastics are extremely small, about 1/70 the width of a human hair.

Pick up a ruler or examine a

strand of hair to visualize how small that is.

Unfortunately, these tiny plastics are in our environment. Many plastics do not break down easily. When found in the ocean, microplastics can be consumed by fish and shellfish and, potentially, later consumed by humans.

According to the Food and Drug Administration, microplastics and nanoplastics have been detected in salt, seafood, bottled water, honey, milk, tea and other foods.

The good news is that the FDA states that “current scientific evidence does not demonstrate the levels of microplastics or nanoplastics detected in foods pose a risk to human health.”

The researchers and regulators acknowledge that we do not have all the scientific information we need. What are some practical tips a savvy consumer can do until more research about microplastics is published and disseminated?

- Avoid heating food in plastic containers, especially in take-out containers or plastic wrap. Use glass containers to warm foods in a microwave.

- Use stainless steel or glass containers for your water, coffee or other beverages. Cook in stainless steel or cast iron pots and pans and other cookware without plastic-based coating.

- Use wood or stainless steel cooking utensils. “Black” cooking and eating utensils have been particularly problematic.

- Use glass or bamboo cutting boards instead of plastic.

- If you care for a baby, do not heat formula or breastmilk in a plastic bottle.

- Eat a simpler diet rich in natural antioxidants. Enjoy more “whole foods” instead of heavily processed foods.

- Stay well hydrated with filtered water from your tap. Water can help flush out toxins.

- Use reusable bags or paper bags instead of plastic bags.

- Look for plastic that is safe for food storage. Items labeled 1, 2, 4 and 5 are usually considered to be the safest. If your city has a recycling program, find out the codes that can be recycled.

Instead of a recipe this week, I am providing a resource for gardening and food preparation. Try growing your own food, helping in a community garden or visiting a farmers market.

See www.ag.ndsu.edu/fieldtofork (and go to the Resource section) to learn more about growing vegetables and fruits, which are rich in compounds that help fight health issues.

You can explore recipes for bell peppers, cabbage, carrots, onions and numerous other colorful vegetables. Aim for a variety of colorful produce. Foods naturally high in red, blue or purple colors, such as red cabbage, blueberries, red grapes and many others, have been reported to be particularly protective.

Oil Activity Report

Permits:
Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Edwards-157-94-2203H-1, NENW 27-157N-94W, Mountrail Co., 680’ FNL and 2016’ FWL, Development, White Earth, 2287’ Ground, API #33-061-05535, Spacing unit: Sections 3, 10, 15 and 22, T157N R94W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Edwards-157-94-2203H-2, NENW 27-157N-94W, Mountrail Co., 680’ FNL and 2049’ FWL, Development, White Earth, 2287’ Ground, API #33-061-05536, Spacing unit: Sections 3, 10, 15 and 22, T157N R94W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Will Trust A-157-94-2734H-4, NENW 27-157N-94W, Mountrail Co., 680’ FNL and 2115’ FWL, Development, Big Butte, 2287’ Ground, API #33-061-05537, Spacing unit: Sections 27 and 34, T157N R94W, outside of spacing unit

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Will Trust C-157-94-2215H-4, NENW 27-157N-94W, Mountrail Co., 680’ FNL and 2148’ FWL, Development, White Earth, 2287’ Ground, API #33-061-05538, Spacing unit: Sections 15 and 22, T157N R94W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Will Trust C-157-94-2215H-5, NENW 27-157N-94W, Mountrail Co., 680’ FNL and 2181’ FWL, Development, White Earth, 2287’ Ground, API #33-061-05539, Spacing unit: Sections 15 and 22, T157N R94W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Will Trust C-157-94-2215H-6, NENW 27-157N-94W, Mountrail Co., 680’ FNL and 2214’ FWL, Development, White Earth, 2287’ Ground, API #33-061-05540, Spacing unit: Sections 15 and 22, T157N R94W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Slawson Exploration Company, Inc., Rebel Federal 2-32-17H, NWSE 29-152N-91W, Mountrail Co., 2058’ FSL and 1940’ FEL, Development, ‘Confidential’, Big Bend, 1908’ Ground, Bottom hole location: SESW 17-151N-91W, API #33-061-05541, Spacing unit: Section 32, T152N R91W and Sections 5, 8 and 17, T151N R91W, location outside of spacing unit

Slawson Exploration Company, Inc., Cannonball Federal 6-27-34H, SWSW 22-152N-91W, Mountrail Co., 1140’ FSL and 752’ FWL, Development, ‘Confidential’, Big Bend, 1951’ Ground, Bottom hole location: SWSE 34-152N-91W, API #33-061-05542, Spacing unit: Sections 24 and 34, T152N R91W

Slawson Exploration Company, Inc., Cannonball Federal 5-27-34H, SWSW 22-152N-91W, Mountrail Co., 1090’ FSL and 752’ FWL, Development, ‘Confidential’, Big Bend, 1949’ Ground, Bottom hole location: SESW 34-152N-91W, API #33-061-05543, Spacing unit: Sections 24 and 34, T152N R91W, loca-

tion outside of spacing unit

Slawson Exploration Company, Inc., Sauger Federal 5-22UH, SWSW 22-152N-91W, Mountrail Co., 1040’ FSL and 752’ FWL, Development, ‘Confidential’, Big Bend, 1948’ Ground, Bottom hole location: SESW 22-152N-91W, API #33-061-05544, Spacing unit: Section 22, T152N R91W, drill-back outside of spacing unit

Slawson Exploration Company, Inc., Cannonball Federal 4-27-34H, SWSW 22-152N-91W, Mountrail Co., 990’ FSL and 752’ FWL, Development, ‘Confidential’, Big Bend, 1947’ Ground, Bottom hole location: SWSW 34-152N-91W, API #33-061-05545, Spacing unit: Sections 27 and 34, T152N R91W, location outside of spacing unit

Additional Information:

Approved for Confidential Status:

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Rice-155-94-1102H-5, SWSW 11-155N-94W, Mountrail Co.

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Rice-155-94-1102H-4, SWSW 11-155N-94W, Mountrail Co.

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Rice-155-94-1102H-6, SWSW 11-155N-94W, Mountrail Co.

Confidential Wells Plugged or Producing:

Hess Bakken Investments II, LLC, EN-Hegland-LW-156-94-3229H-1, Lot 3 5-155N-94W, Mountrail Co.

Permit Cancellations:

Phoenix Operating LLC, TJ E Federal 158-91-32-8-3MBHX, NENE 32-158N-91W, Mountrail Co.

Phoenix Operating LLC, TJ E Federal 158-91-32-8-4MBHX, NENE 32-158N-91W, Mountrail Co.

Well Name Changes:

Silver Hill Energy Operating, LLC, K&L Hegstad North W 158-92-3-27-1MBHX, SESW 3-158N-92W, Mountrail Co. (Previous: K&L Hegstad North 158-92-3-27-1TFHX)

Silver Hill Energy Operating, LLC, K&L Hegstad South W 158-92-10-22-1MBHX, SESW 3-158N-92W, Mountrail Co. (Previous: K&L Hegstad South 158-92-10-22-2MBHX)

More information on oil activity in the state can be found online at <https://www.dmr.nd.gov/oilgas/>.

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Pollinator Week Is June 16-22

Governor Kelly Armstrong has proclaimed June 16-22, 2025, as Pollinator Week in North Dakota. North Dakota is home to many pollinators, including more than 800,000 honeybee colonies.

“Pollinator species such as bees, birds and insects are essential partners of farmers and ranchers in producing much of our food supply. In fact, about 35 percent of the world’s food crops depend on pollination,” Agriculture Commissioner Doug Goehring said. “Pollinators contribute nearly \$20 billion to the value of U.S. crop production.”

“Through best management

practices outlined in the North Dakota Pollinator Plan, farmers, beekeepers, pesticide users and scientists work together to protect and maintain honeybee and other pollinator habitats in the state,” Goehring continued. “The plan enhances communication and mitigates risk to honeybees, while minimizing the impact of that mitigation on production agriculture.”

North Dakota is the number one honey-producing state in the nation and has been since 2004. In 2024, North Dakota bees produced 36.2 million pounds of honey valued at over \$67.4 million.

LIFT Program Opens Applications In Business Loan Funding

The North Dakota Department of Commerce announces the opening of the Legacy Investment for Technology (LIFT) application process, June 16. This funding opportunity drives economic growth in our state by fueling innovative North Dakota businesses.

The LIFT fund received a \$10 million appropriation for the 2025-27 biennium. “We are grateful for the support from the North Dakota 69th Legislative Assembly” said Commerce Economic Development Deputy Director/Head of Investments and Innovation Shayden Akason. “Supporting North Dakota companies that are commercializing intellectual property continues to be a strong component of the state’s economic development.”

LIFT is an innovation loan fund that supports technology advancement by providing financing for commercialization of intellectual property within the state of North Dakota. The use of the loan funds is available to enhance capacity and to the extent possible, leverage state, federal and private sources of funding.

Commerce collaborates with the Bank of North Dakota to manage and administer the loan fund. LIFT loan terms include 0 percent interest for the first three years of the loan, and 2 percent interest for the next two years, and an interest rate equal to a standard Bank of North Dakota loan for all subsequent years. The program is open to North Dakota companies working in advanced computing and data management, agriculture technology, autonomous and unmanned vehicles and technologies, energy, health care, value-added agriculture, value-added energy, and any area specifically identified by the LIFT committee as contributing to the diversification of the state’s economy.

Since its launch in 2019, the LIFT committee has awarded \$44 million to 71 innovative companies, propelling North Dakota’s economic growth.

Applications for the LIFT program will be accepted through July 25, 2025.

For more information, application guidelines and program details, visit <https://belegendary.link/LIFT>.

Proceedings Of The Ross City Council

CITY OF ROSS MINUTES APRIL 9, 2025

Attendees: Council members Travis Torrence, Julie Woodbury, Levi Marmon (via phone); Mayor Wyatt Seibel; Auditor Lacey Jemtrud; Attorney Ryan Sandberg (via Teams)

Public Present: Rory Porth, Brent Blankenship, Cameron Duckworth, Charlie Sorenson

1. Opening and Roll Call
Meeting called to order at 6:51 P.M. Present were Travis Torrence, Julie Woodbury, Levi Marmon (via phone), Wyatt Seibel, Auditor, Lacey Jemtrud, and Attorney Ryan Sandberg (via Teams).

2. Approval of Agenda
Levi moved to approve the agenda, Julie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes
Julie moved to approve the March 12, 2025 meeting minutes, Levi seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Julie moved to approve the March 28, 2025 meeting minutes, Travis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Auditor Report
Julie moved to approve the auditor report as presented, Travis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Old Business
City Shop: The EPA has been called due to the accumulation of rubbish, including bricks placed by Wyatt Seibel from the old school. The EPA tested the bricks for asbestos and inspected the area. It appears we have an unauthorized dump ground as people continue to dispose of rubbish there. Wyatt was supposed to provide a letter per the last meeting regarding the testing of the brick but did not have one.

Community Grant: Heating and cooling system is installed. The heater in the garage still awaiting rebuild. Julie moved to have Bill Rudolph handle the electrical work for an outlet in the furnace room, Travis seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Lacey will contact Bill. Dumpsters will be delivered on May 1st for cleanup, and Chamley will remove the trailer from City property. Lacey needs to order a computer.

Building Repairs: The door has been received, but we are still waiting on a window.

Water Meters: Meters have been received and need to be installed ASAP. Scott from SM Services will install them next week. Lacey met with DSG for a kickoff and will meet again for additional training.

Ordinances: Need to be finalized to ensure the City is protected and aware of the rules. Julie suggested special meeting. Levi mentioned he could attend a meeting on April 14 to work on ordinances.

P&Z: Julie stated we need to review our P&Z. She will contact Souris Basin to see if they can help prepare P&Z for handover to Mountrail County.

Water & Sewer Supervisor: Travis is very busy with his own business. Ward Heidbreder from Rural Water requires someone from the City to help locate curbstops per his contract. Many curbstops need to be located. Travis will reach out to other members for assistance.

Verizon: Wyatt has yet to provide invoices. Lacey offered to help him.

State Auditor and Bonding Claims: No updates; the investigation is ongoing.

Old Dump Grounds: Wires are not up, and horses are still present. Wyatt was supposed to address this before the meeting. He said he will remove the horses and fix the wires immediately.

Roads: Bakken Transload agreed to put gravel and clean up 3rd St E since they are using and damaging it. We will wait to see their actions. Travis asked Wyatt to speak to those parking semis on his property and request they stop using the current route. There is a 6-ton axle weight restriction on City roads.

6. New Business

Curbstop Repairs: Levi moved to repair curbstops and hire SM Services for the repairs, Travis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Water Test Sites: Test sites updated to Hilltop, United Quality, and Ross Water Building. Stage 2 testing is at United Quality. Test sites must be approved by the State. Travis suggested adding a site in the industrial park.

Rental Deductions: Ryan asked the USPS for proof of light bulb changes and ballast work in 2021. The USPS would like a to do rental deductions starting in July 2025 for the 2021 repairs.

Planning and Zoning: A resolution for moving P&Z to Mountrail County was presented.

Rural Water GIS: Travis moved to have Rural Water handle the \$50 curb stop location and the \$100 GIS mapping, Levi seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Monthly Bills: Julie moved to pay bills as presented, Travis seconded. Roll Call: Ayes: Travis, Julie, Levi; Nays: None.

Expenses: ACH UI Tax Job Service 317.51; ACH UI Tax Job Service 317.51; ACH Q1 Federal Taxes 1,650.34; 7583 Newman Signs, Road Signs 184.82; 7584 RTC, Phone & Internet 197.15; 7585 IRS, 2024 Tax Debt 2,651.24; 7586 Farmers Union, Insurance For Firetrucks 208.00; 7587 Light House Trades, Snow Removal 1,335.00; 7588 Enthalpy Services, Heating System 16,630.00; 7589 MDU, Utilities 674.21; 7590 MDU, Utilities 277.69; 7591 MDU, Utilities 296.52; 7592 Circle Sanitation, Garbage Services 2,339.25; 7593 1st District, Water Sample 30.00; 7594 Pringle & Herigstad, Legal Services 1,500.00; 7595 R&T, Water 6,923.84; 7596 Lacey Jemtrud, Salary 2,178.62; 7597 Travis Torrence, Salary 226.25; 7598 Lacey Jemtrud, Reimbursement Printer Toner 168.74; 7599 Void; 7600 Astro Chem, Water Sample 30.00; **Total Expenses: 37,136.69**

Water Accounts: Julie moved to approve water account agreements as presented, Travis seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Cease and Desist: Ryan will have the Sheriff serve a cease and desist order to 13 Emma Lane regarding the trailer.

Building Permit: Levit and Sons finally submitted a building permit. Julie moved to approve the building permit as presented, Levi seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Website: Lacey has reached out to the previous website manager but has not yet received a response.

7. Public Comments: None.

8. Adjournment: Julie made a motion to adjourn at 9:58 P.M., Travis seconded. Meeting adjourned.

Lacey Jemtrud
Auditor

CITY OF ROSS MINUTES SPECIAL MEETING APRIL 14, 2025

Attendees: Council Members Julie Woodbury, Levi Marmon, Travis Torrence (via phone); Auditor Lacey Jemtrud; and Attorney Ryan Sandberg (via Teams)

Public Present: None

1. Opening and Roll Call
Meeting called to order at 5:09 P.M. Present were Julie Woodbury, Levi Marmon, Travis Torrence (via phone); Auditor Lacey Jemtrud; and Attorney Ryan Sandberg (via Teams).

2. Approval of Agenda
Julie moved to approve the agenda, Levi seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Sale of City Items
Levi moved to advertise the fire trucks, tractor, and other items in the newspaper, Julie seconded. Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Julie, Travis, Levi; Nays: None; Motion carried.

4. Planning and Zoning
Option 1: Contract with Souris Basin for Planning & Zoning services. The stipend is \$4,200, with the city responsible for half.

Option 2: Hire someone locally, as the workload may not justify outsourcing to Souris Basin.

5. Water

Coordinate with Scott from SM Services to get his schedule and send notices to customers regarding water meter replacements.

6. Ordinances

Julie, Lacey, and Levi worked on updating the city ordinances.

7. Adjournment

Levi made a motion to adjourn at 7:24 P.M., Julie seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

Lacey Jemtrud
Auditor



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