

94% of U.S. tap water contaminated by plastic fibers — including from the faucets at Trump Tower

Matthew Diebel, USATODAY Published 9:51 a.m. ET Sept. 6, 2017 | Updated 12:03 p.m. ET Sept. 6, 2017



(Photo: Remy Gabalda, AFP/Getty Images)

Trump Tower, we have a plastics problem.

Researchers who tested tap water from around the world found that more than 80% of the samples contained microscopic-sized plastic fibers — including from President Trump's New York City home, they said.

The contamination is particularly high in the United States, where 94% of faucet water is affected, including in samples from the U.S. Capitol and the headquarters of the Environmental Protection Agency.

[According to the study \(https://orbmedia.org/stories/invisibles_plastics/multimedia/\)](https://orbmedia.org/stories/invisibles_plastics/multimedia/), commissioned by the data journalism website *Orb* and conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota, the highest rates of

contamination was found in Lebanon and India, while the lowest occurred in Europe, where 72% of samples contained fibers.

Orb said scientists believe that most of the tiny fibers originate from clothes, upholstery and carpets, including particles released by the actions of washing machines and dryers. According to a U.K. study, each cycle of a washing machine could release more than 700,000 microscopic plastic particles, *The Guardian* reported.

According to *Orb*, such material, known as microplastics, has been shown to absorb toxic chemicals linked to cancer and other illnesses, which are then released when consumed by fish, farm animals and humans.

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"It became clear very early on that the plastic would release those chemicals and that actually, the conditions in the gut would facilitate really quite rapid release," Richard Thompson, a researcher at England's Plymouth University, told *Orb*.

Another scientist, Sherri Mason, a microplastics expert at the State University of New York in Fredonia who supervised the analyses, said studies of wild animals have already raised concerns. "If it's impacting (wildlife)," she told *The Guardian*, "then how do we think that it's not going to somehow impact us?"

However, it's not worthwhile fleeing to bottled water to avoid microplastics — they also were also found in samples of bottled water tested by researchers, *Orb* reported.

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