

Lunapads International is a women-owned social mission driven business based in Vancouver. Founded in 1993 in British Columbia, we are a global brand leader in sustainable personal hygiene that is acclaimed for its innovation, fearlessness and commitment to social justice.

In many ways, plastic has revolutionized the experience of menstruation. Various plastics give leakproof, super-absorbent and smoothing qualities, creating reliable and comfortable commercial options for everyone with a period. Lunapads uses plastics in its products, and they serve us well. However, all this plastic has a price.

Many disposable menstrual products end up in sewage systems and beaches. Reporting by CBC indicates that a large number of these single-use plastics wind up on British Columbian coastlines, damaging the natural beauty of our province¹. Disposable period products are overwhelmingly made of plastic; one estimate places conventional disposable pads at nearly 90% plastic content². We estimate that over 20 billion pads and tampons head to landfill in North America every year. The ecological impacts of contemporary menstruation cannot be denied.

We call on the BC government to implement the following changes to the way we manage plastic in our province:

Take All Steps To Reduce Single Use Plastics

We invite a ban on plastic packaging, and are currently taking steps to eliminate it from our own packaging. Exemptions should be in place for vulnerable populations, to ensure the best quality of life for all British Columbians. We understand disposable period products to be single-use plastics, and recognize that it is impractical to recycle such products.

We encourage that steps be taken to reduce plastic in disposable menstrual products, including a ban on plastic tampon applicators. Cardboard applicators are biodegreable and can be made of recycled materials. Disposable period products should be retained for both consumer choice and their ability to serve vulnerable populations. We recognize that this ban may require action on the federal level.

¹ Environmentalists Push For Plastic Tampon Applicators To Be Included in Federal Plastics Ban | CBC News

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/plastic-tampon-applicator-ban-1.5174510>

² Plastic Periods: Menstrual Products and Plastic Pollution

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/plastics/plastic-periods-menstrual-products-and-plastic-pollution>

Encourage Investment In Durable Products

Encouraging a reduction in single use plastics means an increased reliance on durable alternatives. Research indicates that 63% of plastics are in single-use streams³; encouraging British Columbians to choose reusable products not only reduces the choice of single-use plastics but lowers the overall climate impacts of plastic production.

Encourage (And Regulate) The Recycled Plastic Industry

We call for increased innovation and regulation of recycled plastics. As users of recycled polyester, we can attest to the challenge in finding an ethical, transparent supplier to source true post-consumer material for our products. We are not alone, with journalistic reporting indicating that much of our plastic is simply incinerated or diverted to landfill⁴. The plastics recycling industry needs greater regulation to ensure that consumers know where their plastics are going and greater impetus to create usable end products from recycled plastic. As manufacturers of products with recycled plastic, we would welcome clear and transparent standards for recycled plastic products.

As a BC based organization, Lunapads would advocate for a strategy to improve plastic recycling and reduce the use of single use plastic, especially in specialized products such as disposable menstrual products.

³ “Strategy On Zero Plastic Waste.” [https://www.ccme.ca/files/Resources/waste/plastics/STRATEGY ON ZERO PLASTIC WASTE.pdf](https://www.ccme.ca/files/Resources/waste/plastics/STRATEGY_ON_ZERO_PLASTIC_WASTE.pdf). CCME, November 23, 2018.

⁴ We Asked 3 Companies To Recycle Canadian Plastic and Secretly Tracked It. Only 1 Company Recycled the Material | CBC News <https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/marketplace-recycling-trackers-b-c-blue-box-1.5299176>