



Dr. Sherri A. Mason,

Sustainability Coordinator,
Penn State Behrend

Dr. Mason gained initial recognition as the first to research and identify microplastics pollution in the Great Lakes. Her work has drawn international attention to the threats posed by microplastics in freshwater and led to the passage of state measures banning

microbeads (extremely small pieces of plastic used in cleansing products as exfoliating agents) and to the enactment of the federal **Microbead-Free Waters Act of 2015**. Currently, Dr. Mason is using her expertise to expand her focus to include the presence of microplastics in drinking water.



According to a 2016 study from the Rochester Institute of Technology, **approximately 22 million pounds of plastic flows into the Great Lakes each year** with the highest concentrations reported in Lake Michigan and Lake Erie. Much of this pollution is comprised of microplastics, small particles that are added to toothpaste, body wash, and other personal care items. At one time, Lake Erie had more microplastic pollution than any other body of water on Earth.

The Heinz Family Foundation named Dr. Mason as the recipient of the prestigious **23rd Heinz Award** in the Public Policy category for her groundbreaking research. “Sherri’s research has made the issue of plastic pollution real and present for everyone,” said Teresa Heinz, Chairman of the Heinz Family Foundation. “Her findings have localized the human and environmental health threats associated with microplastics and their presence in food chains as a result, have driven decisive policy change, and cooperation by industry. Her ongoing work can be an important key to ending the steady accumulation of plastics in our environment.”

The City of Oberlin, Public Works Department and First Church of Oberlin proudly announce ***The Perils of Plastic*** – an evening presentation by Dr. Sherri Mason, on Wednesday, October 23, 2019; 6:30 – 8pm at First Church in Oberlin, OH. This event is free and open to all Lorain County residents.

Dr. Mason and partners hope to enhance our understanding of the types and abundance of plastics within the Great Lakes and other freshwater systems, laying the groundwork for important additional investigations into their ecosystem impacts.

Dr. Mason’s presentation is being funded by the Lorain County Board of Commissioners.

