

Amazon says it ditched plastic air pillows

Amazon says that it has gotten rid of plastic air pillows at its warehouses.

“As of October 2024, we’ve removed all plastic air pillows from our delivery packaging used at our global fulfillment centers,” the e-commerce giant said in an October 9th blog post.

It’s a welcome change following years of pressure from environmental groups to stop plastic pollution flooding into oceans. The company is still working to reduce the use of single-use plastics more broadly in its packaging.

“Fantastic news for the world’s oceans”

“The fact that the world’s largest e-commerce company has made plastic air pillows history globally is fantastic news for the world’s oceans,” Matt Littlejohn, senior vice president of strategic initiatives at the nonprofit Oceana, said in a statement in response to Amazon’s announcement.

The most prolific type of plastic litter near coastlines is plastic film – a material that makes up those once ubiquitous air pillows, according to Oceana. That film also happens to be the “deadliest” type of plastic pollution for large mammals like whales and dolphins that might ingest it, Oceana says.

Amazon’s announcement comes after it pledged in June to get rid of plastic air pillows in North America by the end of the year. The company swapped out plastic air pillows and single-use delivery bags for paper and cardboard alternatives in Europe in 2022. It also ditched plastic film packaging at its

facilities in India in 2020.

The US is Amazon's largest market, and the company hasn't managed to fully eliminate plastic packaging in North America just yet. It says it plans to reduce the amount of deliveries containing "Amazon-added plastic delivery packaging" in North America to just one-third of shipments by December, down from two-thirds in December 2023.

<https://www.theverge.com/2024/10/21/24276049/amazon-plastic-air-pillows-packaging>