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Plastic substance leads to heart disease–study

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DAVAO CITY— A substance used in the production of plastic has been found to contribute to heart ailment, the environmental group Greenpeace Philippines said, citing a New York study released recently.

Greenpeace said researchers from New York University Langone Health recently released the findings of their study "linking chemicals found in plastics to heart disease."

"The researchers found that phthalates used in common plastic products like food packaging have contributed to over 350,000 global deaths from heart disease in 2018," Greenpeace added.

Greenpeace cited the study to further promote its campaign against wanton dumping of plastic waste, especially in the waterways. It also said in previous statements that the country is one of Asia's leading contributors to the accumulation of plastic waste in the Pacific.

"Plastics are poisoning our bodies. Every sachet, every single- use plastic produced, carries hidden health risks. This new study linking chemicals used in everyday plastics adds to the large amount of scientific evidence of the health harms connected to the plastic lifecycle and the chemicals used in common plastic products," said Marian Ledesma, Greenpeace Philippines Zero Waste campaigner.

Single-use plastic

SHE said that given the prevalence of single- use plastic in the Philippines, "and the fact that heart disease has consistently been the leading cause of death in the country for many years, these findings should be a clear signal to reduce plastic production and use now."

"Our country is drowning in singleuse plastic, which could contain any of 4,200 hazardous chemicals still used in various plastic products. One example are sachets, which are used for food, cosmetics, and personal care products. Millions of sachets are used each day in the Philippines and could contain many chemicals that can put people's health at risk," she said.

Ledesma said government must enact stringent plastic regulations, specifically mandating plastic reduction.

"As a start, Congress must pass a law to ban single use plastics. At the same time, the government and businesses must support and shift to proven systems like reuse and refill solutions that decrease our reliance on sachets and other single-use plastics," she said.

She said that transitioning from single- use plastic to reuse and refill systems "not only protects people's health and food security, it also safeguards the health of our environment and climate."