

I believe in American ignorance. From reusable grocery bags to lead-free garden hose nozzles designed specifically to prevent bird bath contamination, people in this country will buy anything that bears a “go green” label. While I understand most manufacturers have the intentions of developing sustainable products, I can also see through the imitators which have an intention of nothing more than selling their product to their legal prey, an ignorant public.

The “go green” movement in this country over the past several months was like a speeding freight train with no brakes on dismembered tracks. With over 200 individual green material standard sets, the actual sustainability of most products has improved little to none at all - and in some cases some products have become less sustainable. Does this discourage buyers? No – all it takes to entice customers to buy is a simple go-green logo on the packaging...perhaps commending the company on purchasing additional pollution trading credits just to offset factory emissions from creating the “green” product.

I am confused by towns where animal feces removal is mandated, even on the owner’s private property. The town recommends the usage of a “green” bag to pick up the waste, to be placed into the garbage. While the need for waste removal on public property is obvious, it escapes me how putting dog waste into a plastic bag and sending it to a landfill can be more sustainable than letting it decay where it was naturally placed on the owner’s private property.

There is also ignorance between “go green” and environmentalism. People don’t understand that the environmental impact of these products is not low enough to make any significant difference in the traumatic state the ecosystems feel. Dr. Hilger is not an incrementalist, nor am I. Unfortunately, most Americans (whether they admit or not) are. Americans “know” that using only reusable grocery bags and buying Clorox refills rather than new spray bottles will prevent landfills from reaching capacity; they “know” that electric cars will eliminate all CO2 emissions (forgetting about electricity production, conveniently enough); and they “know” that anything with a green label has a positive effect on the environment. I am afraid to find out what we will “know” tomorrow.

The American ignorance towards a green society will soon bring one of the most advanced countries to its knees in a social, economic, and environmental disaster. While most products have good intentions to reduce environmental impact, their goal is only that: reduce environmental impact. Americans must understand that their environmental impact not only needs to be reduced, nor eliminated, but reversed. This will take more than Suzanne, mother of seven, from buying “go green” products based on misleading packaging.