

GET THE FACTS: TAP WATER VS. BOTTLED WATER

TAP WATER

Tap water is water supplied to a **faucet**.



Its uses include:

- ✓ drinking
- ✓ cooking
- ✓ washing
- ✓ flushing toilets

In developed countries it is generally potable, although water quality issues exist. In many cities and towns in America, municipal water comes from **large wells, lakes, rivers, or reservoirs**. Most cities and towns process the water at treatment plants before the water is tested for quality and is then piped to residential homes and industries.

Access to clean water is essential to human health and survival.

In 1974, The United States Congress enacted the **Safe Drinking Water Act**. This federal law intends to **ensure that the quality of Americans' drinking water is clean and safe**. The law authorized the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to set national quality standards for drinking water to protect humans against harmful effects from exposure to naturally-occurring and human-made contaminants in public water systems. This law helped improve the safety of public drinking water sources. The EPA continues to oversee more than 150,000 public water systems across the U.S.

BOTTLED WATER

Tests have shown that the quality of bottled water can be questionable. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) monitors the production and distribution of bottled water, **BUT** there is **NO** mandatory testing program for bottled water. According to some estimates, it can take up to

THREE LITERS OF WATER



to produce **ONE** liter of bottled water, which is not an efficient use of water.

Bottled water companies draw heavily on underground water sources called aquifers as they pump groundwater for bottling.

This can harm watersheds and deplete natural water supplies.

Bottled water has become a multi-billion-dollar industry. Bottled water companies gain high profits by drawing water from public water sources, putting it in plastic containers, and reselling it at

3,000

times the price of regular tap water.

An interesting fact is that the EPA, Clean Water Act and the Safe Drinking Water Act were established out of the environmental movement in the 1960's. **This movement was inspired by the Cuyahoga River in Cleveland,** and other rivers around the nation, which caught fire in the late 1960's, due to pollution and contamination.

THE PLASTIC PROBLEM

The plastic used to make **single-use water bottles contains chemicals** known to be endocrine disruptors. These chemicals, such as bisphenol A (BPA), alter the way the body makes and uses certain hormones, and can have negative health consequences. Plastic bottles can also leach additional chemicals in the water, which is dangerous to human health.

Many types of plastics are considered safe if they are only used once, such as #1 polyethylene terephthalate (PET or PETE). However, if this type of plastic is used over and over it can leach harmful chemicals. The leaching of these various plastic chemicals has been linked to hormone disruption and cancers.



IMAGE SOURCE: img.wonderhowto.com/img/original/77/53/63573686141237/0/635736861412377753.jpg

In addition to these safety issues, **there is also a huge waste issue associated with using bottled water**. More than 80% of recyclable plastic bottles end up in landfills each year. They do not break down naturally and release toxic chemicals as they do break down.

The Environmental Working Group, a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to protecting human health and the environment does not recommend using bottled water unless it's in the case of an emergency.



WHAT WE CAN DO

Get your tap water tested. If you have safe drinking water, drink from your tap. If not, first get a water filter to remove contaminants to ensure your water is as clean and safe as possible.

To reduce the amount of plastic waste from bottled water consumption use your own reusable water bottle. There are many great bottle options, from glass to stainless steel.

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