

## **Should Water be Allowed to be Managed as a Profit-Driven Commodity?**

Beyond the issues of your health and the environment, which I'll discuss in a moment, bottled water represents a novel form of privatization, in which private corporations have succeeded at making water a commodity.

The film compares the cost of drinking water to gasoline, stating that as the cost of water has surpassed the cost of gas, it's becoming evident that drinking water is the next Empire... Already, the World Bank has estimated the value of the world water market at \$800 billion per year.

In communities around the United States, people are now gathering together to protect their local water supplies from being sold by private corporations.

Changes in global climate have caused water supplies to dwindle in certain areas, and the film includes a segment highlighting the irony many of these communities now face. For example, in 2007, Raleigh, North Carolina faced a terrible drought. Yet the Pepsi plant continued their water bottling plant operations even at the height of the drought. Pepsi Company used an estimated 400,000 gallons of municipal water a day, which they bottled and sold back to the community right as it was running out of water... It would seem obvious that water supplies should be reserved for the local communities, but as stated in the film, when private corporations control the water supply, you end up with "a collision in moral values."

I highly recommend setting aside some time to view this important film, to learn more about the water industry, and how it affects you.

I would say, and I suspect you would agree, that water is more a "right" than it is a commodity. And that private corporations should have no more control over the selling of water than they do the selling of our air supplies. Unfortunately, even public water supplies are being increasingly taken over by private corporations, and in some areas of the world are up for grabs by the highest bidder.

Is there anything you can do about it?

Sure. You can get involved on a local level, but even beyond that, we, as consumers, can simply refuse to buy into the "water as a commodity scheme," by not buying bottled water. And there are plenty of reasons for ditching this habit.

### **Why Pay 1,900 Times More for Your Water?**

Many Americans still drink bottled water under the belief that it is healthier than the water from their tap. Unfortunately, many bottled waters are simply bottled tap water, which may or may not have received any additional treatment. For example, Pepsi's Aquafina and Coca-Cola Co.'s Dasani bottled waters are both made of purified water from public reservoirs. The major difference is the price. You pay *1,900 times as much* for this water, simply because it's now in a plastic bottle. Furthermore, most municipal tap water must actually adhere to stricter purity standards than the bottled water industry. An [independent test performed by the Environmental Working Group](#) revealed 38 low-level contaminants in bottled water, with each of the 10 tested brands containing an average of eight chemicals including:

- Disinfection byproducts (DBPs)
- Caffeine and Tylenol
- Nitrate

So what you are paying for is often no different, or even worse, than the water that comes out of your faucet. And when you factor in the harm that may be caused by health-harming chemicals that can leach from the plastic bottle, and the environmental impact of plastic garbage, bottled water becomes a losing proposition no matter how you look at it.

### **Drinking from Plastic Bottles May Be Harmful to Your Health**

When drinking bottled water you need to think not only about the purity of the water but also about the bottle itself. Plastic is not an inert substance like glass. It contains chemicals like bisphenol A (BPA) and phthalates, which mimic hormones in your body. These chemicals can leach out and contaminate the water under the best of conditions, but tends to increase anytime the bottle has been exposed to heat, and when it is reused. This is a concern as even tiny concentrations of these chemicals can cause health problems such as:

Structural damage to your brain	Increased fat formation and risk of obesity	Altered immune function	Stimulation of prostate cancer cells
Hyperactivity, increased aggressiveness, and impaired learning	Early puberty, stimulation of mammary gland development, disrupted reproductive cycles, and ovarian dysfunction	Changes in gender-specific behavior, and abnormal sexual behavior	Increased prostate size, and decreased sperm production

### **Plastic Trash is a Major Environmental Threat**

As discussed in the film, the bottled water industry is also a major contributor to pollution and environmental destruction, in more ways than one:

- About 1.5 million tons of plastic are used to manufacture water bottles each year around the world, and the processing itself releases toxic compounds like nickel, ethylbenzene, ethylene oxide and benzene into the environment
- According to [the Sierra Club](#), the U.S. alone uses 1.5 million barrels of oil to make plastic water bottles, the majority of which then end up in landfills
- Plastic is also a major source of oceanic pollution. An [article published last year in Wired Magazine](#) reported that “bisphenol A, a synthetic compound that mimics estrogen and is linked to developmental disorders, is ubiquitous in Earth’s oceans”
- Plastic pollution has even entered the food chain, and it's not just marine animals that are being affected. You, too, are ingesting minute levels of plastics every day, which means you're exposed to a mix of plastic chemicals and additives that are incompatible with life
- The industry also hurts the environment and threatens the water supplies of local communities by pumping water from underground aquifers. These natural springs serve as water sources for nearby streams, wells and farms, but the aggressive pumping can easily dry them out prematurely

## What's the Solution?

Once you realize that many sources of bottled water have the following characteristics, the choice to stop using it becomes simple. Fortunately, the alternative to having pure water is also simple: filter your own at home.

- No safer than tap water
- Extremely expensive
- Often contaminated by plastics chemicals
- Contributing to massive environmental harm

## Why Filtering Your Tap Water is so Important

Obviously it would be far less expensive to filter the water yourself for your chronic water use. It does make sense to have access to bottled water when you do not have access to the filtered water in your home.

As mentioned previously, bottled water is less regulated than common tap water; so you can never be certain what will be in it. But drinking unfiltered tap water can also be a risky proposition in many areas. Between 2004 and 2009, more than 20 percent of U.S. water treatment systems were found to have [violated key provisions of the Safe Drinking Water Act](#), yet fewer than six percent of these violations were ever fined or punished.

You can get a general idea of what types of contaminants could be in your drinking water by [reviewing the following graphic from GOOD](#) (reprinted with permission.) It gives you a look at the five most and least polluted water systems in America (in cities with a population of more than 100,000), and highlights the pollutants that are of greatest concern to your health.

Over 70 percent of US municipal water supplies also have fluoride (a highly toxic poison) added during water treatment, which has been [linked to a number of health problems](#), most notably [reduced IQ](#) and immune system disruption.

And then there are [disinfection byproducts, or DBPs](#), which are responsible for most of the toxic effects of chlorinated water. Chlorine by itself is relatively harmless, but when used to treat water, it produces DBP's as a side effect and these potent toxic chemicals have been linked to reproductive disorders and cancer.

## What is the BEST Water You Can Drink?

I believe the absolute finest source of water in the world comes not from artesian wells but from gravity-fed mountain springs, obtained directly from where it emerges from the earth. This water is naturally filtered and structured by the earth itself, and contains living organisms like certain types of beneficial algae.

If you're up to the task, you can collect your own spring water for your drinking water needs. There is a [web site called Find a Spring.com](#) where you can locate your nearest natural spring. The website

also allows you to add a spring that is not currently in the database. You can include information about the spring's temperature and location, and insert pictures or videos you took. If you don't live near a mountain, don't despair, as just about *any* spring is better than all other available options. So if you're at sea level, just use a local spring.

Typically they are monitored by the local municipalities for contaminants, and best of all, most of these springs are FREE. That's right, the best water in the world and there is no charge for it!

You can easily store 10 five-gallon jugs in most cars and it is a wonderful opportunity to escape the city and mingle with nature. Large water bottles can be purchased online. Glass would be best, but in that case, you may be better off using the three-gallon jars as the five-gallon jugs are quite large, and get very heavy when filled with water. Just remember to wrap the bottles with some blankets or towels so they don't bang against each other and break in your car.

### **Recommendations for In-Home Water Filtration**

If you could only afford one filter, there is no question in most experts minds that the shower filter is the most important, even more important than filtering your drinking water. This may sound odd, but this is because the biological damage you incur via exposure to water contaminants through your skin and lungs far surpasses the damage done by drinking it (as ingesting it at least gives your body a fighting chance to eliminate the toxins through your organs of elimination).

Naturally, the best solution would be to install a whole house water filtration system. This not only protects your body (inside and out), but also your appliances as well. There's just one water line coming into your house. Putting a filter on this is the easiest and simplest strategy you can implement to take control of your health by ensuring the water in your house is as clean as possible.

I recommend systems that use at least 60 pounds of filter media and can produce eight or more gallons a minute. When you are running two different showers, the dishwasher and the kitchen sink at the same time, you'll find out why these minimum levels are so important. This recommendation covers a home or apartment up to 3200 sq./ft. If your home is larger than that, you may need two whole house water filtration systems.

I also recommend looking for a whole house water filter that has three separate stages of contamination removal:

- Stage one removes sediment.
- Stage two removes chlorine and heavy metals.
- Stage three should be a heavy-duty carbon filter for removing hormones, drug residues, chemicals, pesticides, and herbicides.

You want to look for granular carbon in the carbon filter, not a solid block of carbon. The granular carbon allows for better water flow, which translates to more water pressure and better filtering properties as well.

“The Dangers in Your Drinking Water | Tapped: The Movie.” *Mercola.com*,  
[articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2011/09/26/why-is-water-the-next-empire.aspx](http://articles.mercola.com/sites/articles/archive/2011/09/26/why-is-water-the-next-empire.aspx).