

Bottled Water

Why we care

Slick marketing and public concern about tap-water quality have caused commercially bottled water sales to triple over the past decade.

Bottled water is promoted for its convenience and purity. In fact, bottled water in general is no cleaner than tap water. Bottled water is regulated by the FDA, but tap water is regulated by the EPA, which has tighter safety restrictions and inspection regimens.

Environmentally, supplying Americans with the plastic bottles consumes more than 17 million barrels of oil a year—enough to fuel one million cars. That doesn't include the fuel and expense of shipping (water is heavy). Additionally, about 38 billion bottles end up in the landfill or as litter after just one use. And the littered bottles contribute to hundreds of square miles of floating debris in the Pacific Ocean, much of which ends up on our beaches—either as intact bottles or fragments.

Simple, positive change

- Use durable, refillable bottles. Stainless steel or glass containers are preferred because they won't leach chemicals into the water.
- To rid tap water of chlorine, purchase a filter, or simply leave the uncovered water in the refrigerator so the chlorine can dissipate.
- If you are concerned about lead, run the tap until the water is cold (if it has been sitting in the pipes over six hours) or request a free test from your [local water provider](#). If the lead level is high, you can purchase a faucet-mount or under-sink filter that removes lead.

Questions or feedback? Contact Jeanne Roy at jeanne@earthleaders.org.