

Why You Should Care

- Bottled water is the way corporations are taking the human right to safe, affordable, accessible drinking water and turning it into a commodity, sold at market prices to those who can afford to pay the price, often at 1,000 times the cost of tap water.
- With bottled water, the giant corporations, primarily Coke, Pepsi and Nestlé, are creating a parallel private distribution system over which they have full control from the water resource to the market shelf.
- More than 10 billion plastic water bottles end up as garbage or litter each year. We all pay for their disposal with our tax dollars.
- Bottled water introduces a whole new stream of toxic plastics from manufacturing the plastic and then rinsing the bottle that puts plastic dust into the waste stream, including also chlorine and disinfectants needed to flush water lines. Hormone disrupting chemicals used in plastic contaminate the environment, leach into our landfills and pollute our bodies.
- Bottled water is not tested by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). It is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, which does no testing. While Coke and Pepsi use municipal water which is tested by EPA, Nestlé uses spring water which is only tested by the industry. When the Natural Resources Defense Council tested more than 1000 bottles of 103 brands, they found contamination, including synthetic organics, bacteria and arsenic, exceeding allowable limits in at least one sample from about one-third of the brands. Check out www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/bwbwinx.asp.



What You Can Do!



- Avoid buying and using bottled water.

- Use a stainless steel water bottle. Refill it from the tap and carry tap water with you during the day.



- At public events, the office and home, offer pitchers of water. Ask your public officials to do the same at public meetings. Don't give the water bottlers free advertising.

- Inquire whether local restaurants are selling and serving bottled water. Educate them about the issues. Ask them to serve pitchers of tap water.



- Inquire whether your city or school district is negotiating or has signed an exclusivity contract for bottled water and other beverages. File a "Public Records Act (PRA) Request" to learn contract terms, minimum sales, advertising rights, and penalties or incentives linked to sales. See flier on Exclusivity Contracts at www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/water

- Make sure that your public works department provides good quality tap water and that it is available for everyone in your community at an affordable price.



- If for any reason your municipal water is not meeting Environmental Protection Agency standards or you have other concerns, buy a filter to attach to your faucet. Even the best filters are far cheaper than bottled water.

- Do a price comparison of local municipal tap water and bottled water brands at your local stores and publicize it. Ask your local food coop and other sympathetic stores to post the price comparison.

- Do a taste test comparing your local water and several brands of municipal water. For details go to www.thealliancefordemocracy.org/water

- Find out where the bottled water sold in your stores comes from. Find out what kind of impact the pumping is having on the environment.

- Show the documentary *Thirst* available from the AfD office and hold public forums to educate the community about the need for a strong local law to stop corporations from taking your water. Use the AfD flier at: www.thealliancefordemocracy.org

- Advocate for strict local, county and state groundwater laws to protect your aquifer, watershed, and other water sources from pollution. Work to identify local, actual and potential sources of pollution and advocate for enforcement of laws, penalties and clean up.

- Talk with your family and friends about the danger of toxic chemicals, including hormone disruptors, leaching into bottled water (see page 6-7).

- Expose the serious public health impacts of plastics production and disposal. Corporations have no right to pollute our bodies.