



BOTTLED WATER

There are sound reasons for avoiding commercial bottled water. Bottled water is irrelevant for health, financially irrational and harms the environment.

ENVIRONMENT

Energy

Energy from fossil fuels is required to produce and transport water and bottles. Over 456,131 barrels of oil are used every year to manufacture bottled water for Australians. Bottled water is responsible for over 60,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions every year.

Water

1 litre bottle of water requires 3 to 5 litres of water in its manufacturing process.

Waste

The most commonly used plastic for making water bottles is polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic. Only 35% of PET gets recycled in Australia. The other millions of bottles end up in landfills. Buried water bottles can take up to 1,000 years to biodegrade. Incinerating used bottles produces toxic by-products such as ash containing heavy metals and chlorine gas. If the bottles are recycled, a large quantity of water and energy are used in the process.

HEALTH

Bottled water has no health advantage over tap water. Tap water in Australia is closely controlled, tested and safe and contains fluoride, essential to prevent dental decay. Bottled water contains no fluoride.

ECONOMY

In Adelaide the price of mains water is about 71 cents per kilolitre, equivalent to 0.071 cents per litre whereas bottled water costs about \$1 per litre. Australians are spending over \$300 million on bottled water a year.

Actions we can take

- Drink tap water, and when out and about take your own reusable water bottle filled with tap water. If the smell and taste of chlorine is a concern, leave water in an open container for 12 hours which allows the chlorine to evaporate.
- In situations where the purchase of bottled water is unavoidable, purchase Australian water.

BOTTLED WATER BANS, PARTIAL OR COMPLETE

This brief summary list shows that resistance to bottled water is widespread. Details can be found on www.earth-policy.org

Australia

- State Government of NSW
- Local Government Association of NSW.
- Manly since 2007
- Bundanoon during 2009

USA

- Conference of Mayors
- 18 cities up to 2007
- 11 States and Counties
- Some companies and religious organisations

OTHER

- Canada - 6 cities
- France - Paris
- Italy - Rome and Florence
- UK – Liverpool, Cornwall and Gloucestershire

Sources

www.bottledwateralliance.com.au

The Bottled Water Alliance, headed by Planet Ark co-founder John Dee is an arm of Do Something, a not-for-profit organisation that brings together the resources of the business community and the goodwill of the Australian public. Do Something works to create and promote positive social and environmental change

www.earth-policy.org

The Earth Policy Institute is dedicated to building a sustainable future as well as providing a plan of how to get from here to there

www.pacinst.org

The Pacific Institute is a nonpartisan research institute that works to advance environmental protection, economic development, and social equity