

The Bottled Water Story

Bottled water has become one of the largest industries in the world. Over half of all Americans drink bottled water, spending 240-10,000 times more per gallon for bottled water than they do for tap water!

- ◆ Is bottled water really the best way to get healthy, great tasting water?
- ◆ How do you know about the quality of the water you're buying?
- ◆ Is the cost worth it?

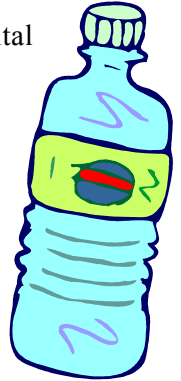


Controversial reports from the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) in Washington, DC, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) in Gland, Switzerland, say no. Even the Federal agency that regulates bottled water quality, the FDA, says no! "Companies who market bottled water as being safer than tap water are defrauding the American public," says U.S. FDA. You see, the Federal regulations that govern bottled water only require it to be as good as tap water, not better. There are no assurances, regulations or requirements that bottled water be any higher in quality than tap water. Public water systems must issue annual "Water Quality Reports," telling consumers what is in their water - the bottled water industry is not required to do so.

In a recent nationwide study of consumers, some 55% said they used bottled water in their homes. The reasons given for these high usages of bottled water were as follows: Taste (39%), Safety (18%) and Purity (15%). The types of bottled water uses varied: Individual Bottles - in home (51%), Individual Bottles - Travel (29%), Drinking Water Service (16%), and Other (4%). Overall, consumers of municipally treated tap water are

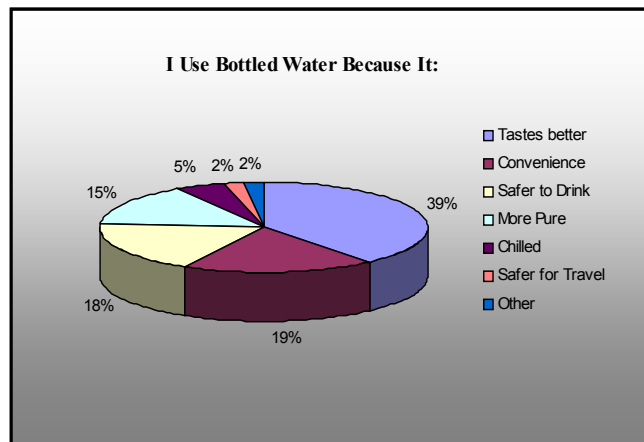
"satisfied" with their water service, but clearly there is a false misconception that bottled water is superior.

It has also become a target of the environmental community due to the massive amounts of plastic bottles being disposed of from bottled water use.



Bottled water is now a multi-billion dollar business... the fastest growing and most profitable segment of the entire beverage industry. If you currently buy bottled water, chances are it's because you prefer the taste and trust the quality over tap water, but do you really know what is or is not in bottled water? When it comes to something as important as our water, which makes up over 70% of our body and ultimately determines our health more than anything else, knowing the facts is essential.

Indoor plumbing was one of the greatest lifestyle enhancements in history. We once had to leave our house, transport and store water. Then, we progressed to indoor plumbing and had a continuous supply of water at our fingertips. Now, we are regressing... people are once again transporting and storing water. Instead of walking to the well, we are driving to the store or having water driven to us. Bottled water simply doesn't make sense, don't let high priced ad campaigns make you think that it does.



It just doesn't make sense to go to the expense and inconvenience of bottled water, when we can have higher quality water on tap, in our own homes, for around .002¢ a gallon! ■



Replace Your Old Toilet & Recycle it for Free!

Replace your old toilet as soon as possible! Every day it's wasting water and money. Any toilet put in before 1993 uses up to three times as much water as a new toilet. An average household can save \$100 a year on water and sewer bill with new toilets. You can also recycle old toilets for free at the South Seattle Recycling and Disposal Sation (call 206 - 684-8400 for hours and directions) or at your local recycling event. A flier with the details will be sent to you. E-mail Tom Vane at tvane@nud.net for more information.



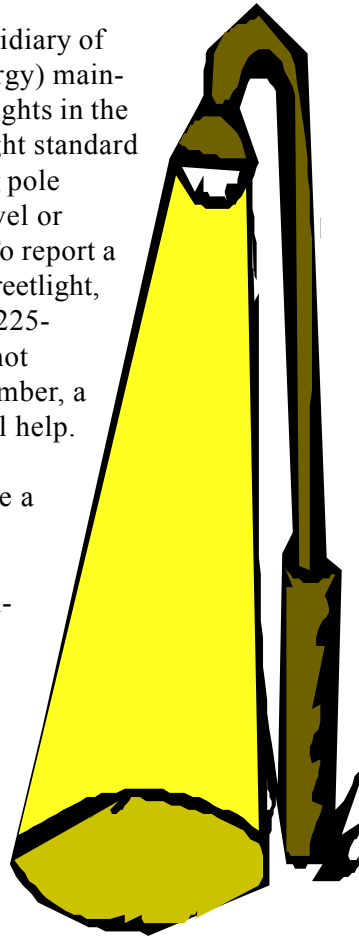
After you recycle your old water-waster, be sure to check out the new list of top-performing toilets or "FlushStars," which are now available on the web at Savingwater.org or by calling (206) 684-SAVE (7283). These toilets flushed very well in an independent lab test. They are designed to save water for many years to come. The list includes a variety of manufacturers, styles, and prices. ■

Street Lights

As the season changes, the daylight becomes scarce. Proper street lighting is important for convenience and to keep everyone safe. Please take time to report burned-out or malfunctioning streetlights.

Into Light (a subsidiary of Puget Sound Energy) maintains most streetlights in the District. Each light standard has an identifying pole number at eye-level or slightly higher. To report a malfunctioning streetlight, please call (888) 225-5773. If you do not know the pole number, a street address will help.

If you do not have a streetlight in your area or wish to inquire about additional streetlights, please call the District Office at (425) 398-4400, ext. 414, and we will research the options available for you. ■



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Let the Leaves Fall!

When those leaves begin to fall, don't bag them up and haul them away! Leaves have a high mineral content and contain large amounts of fibrous organic matter. You can compost them or use them as a mulch to benefit your garden. It will reduce what you spend on fertilizers and water for irrigation.

When autumn comes to the forest and the leaves drop to the ground, they are worked on by bacteria and fungi to turn them into a rich dark mould, which feeds the trees and other plants in years to follow. Leaf mould is made up of leaves which have decomposed to the point where the leaves are no longer distinguishable, and just the skeletal system of the leaf is left. We can learn a valuable lesson from this natural recycling and put it to good use in our own backyards.



By themselves, leaves will decompose very slowly. To speed things up you can either add a nitrogen supplement such as manure, or you can shred the leaves, greatly reducing their volume as well.

For more information on yard care you can go to <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/swd/ResRecy/composting/naturalyardbooklet.asp> or call the Natural Lawn & Garden Hotline at 206-633-0224. ■



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