

Is Tap Water Just As Safe As Bottled Water?

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Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. Bottled water has become consumers' top pick over tap water because people think it's safer and tastier.
 - B. After many tests, tap water is proven to be just as healthy and safe as bottle water. Statistics show that tap water has been monitored more closely than bottled water, but there are some improvements that need to be made in order to keep it safe at all times.
 - C. Thesis: There are several facts that show that tap water is healthy and safe; nevertheless, there are cases that show that tap water has been contaminated with harmful chemicals, but some bottled water has those same chemicals consumers wish to stay away from. It's true that there are some disadvantages in tap water, but overall, it is a much better choice.
- II. Body
 - A. Background
 - 1. Facts about tap water
 - 2. Facts about bottled water
 - B. Pros
 - 1. Tap water is safe and healthy.
 - 2. Tap water is monitored closely.
 - 3. It is inexpensive.
 - C. Cons
 - 1. Public systems are compromised after disasters.
 - 2. Water can contain harmful chemicals.
 - 3. Not all public water systems are inspected as they should be.
- III. Conclusion
 - A. Tap water is proven to be as safe as bottled water. In fact, more tests are done on the public water systems than bottled water to make sure it meets health requirements. There is room for improvement to ensure tap water remains healthy at all times.
 - B. There are many facts that prove that tap water is healthy and safe; however, there are cases where tap water was contaminated with harmful chemicals, yet bottled water has the exact chemicals consumers wish to stay away from. Yes, there are some disadvantages in tap water, but it's the best choice overall.

Isn't it amazing how bottled water sales have gone up over the years? Unfortunately, we live in a world full of people who are affected by social learning theory. When people see commercials on TV, hear commercials on the radio, or see something on social media, they tend to do it. That's exactly how bottled water became so popular. Are people really getting their money's worth by buying all this bottled water because it's portrayed to be better than tap water? Is bottled water safer, tastier, and healthier than tap water? That's a question many people have been asking for years now. After several tests, results showed that tap water is in fact just as safe as bottled water. Statistics show that there are some improvements that need to be made to keep it safe at all times; however, tap water is monitored more closely to meet health requirements. There is a great deal of facts that confirm that tap water is just as safe, healthy, and tasty; nevertheless, there are several cases that prove that tap water has been contaminated. Although there are those cases, it's also known for some bottled water to have some of the same harmful chemicals, which defeats the purpose of buying bottled water. Yes, it's true that there are some disadvantages in tap water; moreover, it is still a better choice overall.

When it comes to tap water, it's been pretty much labeled as being bad. Bottled water has taken over. Honestly, the consumption of either is better when it comes to comparing it to juices or sodas. However, the question is whether or not tap water is just as safe as bottled water. Tap water has to be tested regularly to make sure all harmful chemicals are out. Before bottled water became so popular, tap water was the "go-to." In 1974, The Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) was passed by Congress. Under SDWA, legal limits were set on the levels of contaminants in drinking water. The legal limits are there to protect human health. The United

States Environmental Protection Agency set water testing schedules that are mandatory and techniques for treating water in case it is contaminated (“Water in a Bottle vs. Tap,” 2009). Tap water has to go through a process almost like bottled water, so it is most definitely not inferior to bottled water. In fact, most bottled waters come from the public water systems before it’s processed (“Tap Water Basically Safe,” 2007).

Bottled water is good and healthy, but why is it said to be better than tap water? Like tap water, bottled water, too, has some of the same chemicals that are harmful. In the statement of Joseph K. Doss, who is President and CEO of the International Bottled Water Association, he explained why he thought bottled water was safer than tap water. In the hearing, he discussed the method used to purify the water. Source monitoring, reverse osmosis, UV light, and source protection are all effective methods (2009). However, he didn’t go in depth about the different kinds of bottled waters. For instance, all bottled water isn’t distilled. Some is spring water, which means it comes from an actual spring. Mineral water is from an underground source and has all the minerals in it that some consumers may not want. Surprisingly, some bottled water comes from municipal water, which is tap. If there’s not an essential difference between the two, then why spend so much money on it?

In order to maintain its safety and continue to remain healthy, tap water has to meet certain requirements. More importantly, tap water is monitored more frequently to ensure not only good quality, but to ensure that contaminant levels are met. It’s not a secret which one is better for the environment. The landfills are being clogged by millions of plastic bottles (Bullers, 2002, p.8). Shouldn’t tap water be considered safer when bottled water doesn’t have to be tested for everything tap water has to be tested for? For example, tap water has to be

filtered to remove pathogens, tested for cryptosporidium and giardia viruses, and disinfected. Bottled water plants test the water weekly for bacteria, yet tap water is tested 100 times a month. There have been tests done on bottles and caps to see if the chemicals from them can contaminate the water. Some tests have shown small traces of phthalates could be coming from the bottle caps. It seems as if tap water has a quite a few advantages. Another plus is that consumers can request an Annual Water Quality Report ("Tap Water Vs. Bottled Water," 2016). Ultimately, people are free to choose whatever they like, but if they look at facts, those facts clearly show that tap water is just as safe and healthy, so the money on bottled water can be spent elsewhere.

There are many pros when it comes to tap water, but there are some cons, too. Natural disasters such as floods, tornados, and fires compromise the public water supply. During those times are when bottled water is really needed (Davidson, 2013). There have been cases where tap water was contaminated and made people sick or even killed them. A lot of times these incidents happen in a poor area. When pipes are extremely old, lead will get in the public system's water supply. Lead in the body is very harmful. It is harder on kids than adults because their immune systems aren't as strong as adults. If children have consumed lead, it could be deadly if they've had too much. They could also have behavior problems, vision and hearing problems, slowed growth, anemia, seizures, or comas. Of course those are rare cases; however, it can happen and has happened. In pregnant women, lead affects the fetus' development, and it also gets into the breastmilk. In adults, there can be reproduction problems, kidney problems, and cardiovascular problems. Although lead in the tap water is harmful, there are 18 other chemicals that slipped through the crack (Postman, 2016). That's

the main reason the inspectors need to do their job adequately. It will most certainly cut down on the contamination issues. Where there are pros, there are always cons. It seems as if there are too many cons when it comes to tap water, but in reality, there are way more pros than cons.

Because of social learning theory, bottled water sales have boosted up, and consumers are really under the impression that it is better than tap water. A big percentage of bottled waters come from the public water system, which makes them one and the same. How can bottled water be so much better than tap when if it doesn't go through half the number of tests to make sure it meets health requirements? Statistics clearly show that tap water is just as safe as bottled water, so why not save a few coins? The processes to filter both waters are a little different; however, both types of water, for the most part, have the same chemicals in them. The public water system has a number of regulations and processes they need to work with to maintain safe and healthy water, but altogether, it has gotten much better over the years, coming a long way. Soon, more and more consumers will see that there's absolutely no need to spend so much money on bottled water when you can get tap water for free or dirt cheap.

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