Tapped or Capped?

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Outline

I. Introduction
   A. Americans have become more health conscious and are choosing water as a drink.
   B. Which drinking water is better and safer, bottled water or tap water?
   C. Topics
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      2. Bottled water as an alternative
      3. Tap water concerns
      4. Bottled water in the red zone

II. Body
   A. Why tap water is better
      1. Inexpensive
      2. Readily available
      3. Some bottled water is tap water
      4. More stringent regulation process
   B. Bottled water as an alternative
      1. Convenient
      2. Tastes better
   C. Tap water concerns
      1. Contains toxins
      2. Contains chlorine
      3. Contains fluoride
   D. Bottled water in the red zone
      1. Negative impact on the environment
      2. Very costly
      3. Misleading images

III. Conclusion
   A. Review of main points
      1. Tap water pros
         a. Inexpensive
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      2. Bottled water pros
         a. Convenient
         b. Tastes better
      3. Tap water cons – it contains toxins
      4. Bottled water cons
         a. Negative impact on the environment
         b. Very costly
   B. Closing statement

Americans have become more health conscious and are choosing water as a drink. However, the question is which is better and safer, tap water or bottled water? Tap water is plentiful, but is it safe to drink? Bottled water is convenient, but is it safe to drink? Tap water is water that flows through pipes from the public water system and comes directly from a faucet or tap. Bottled water is drinking water sealed in a plastic or glass bottle and sold in stores. Both tap water and bottled water have great advantages. Tap water costs less and is readily available. Bottled water is convenient and the perception is that it tastes better ("Bottled Water vs. Tap Water," n.d.). Tap water and bottled water also have concerning disadvantages. Tap water contains toxins, chlorine, and fluoride, while bottled water has a negative impact on the environment and is very costly.

Tap water is environment friendly and promotes sustainability. Drinking tap water is a great way to reduce the amount of waste that goes into landfills. Tap water is readily available. It's as simple as going into the kitchen and turning on the faucet or perhaps drinking from a water fountain. At a cost of about $2 per every thousand gallons, tap water is by far the least expensive way to buy water (Livingston, 2016). Tap water that comes from a public water system is generally safer than bottled water. Tap water is strictly regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA's safety standards are very stringent; it is mandatory that tap water meets all safety standards before leaving the treatment plant. In fact, approximately one-fourth of bottled water is tap water ("The Truth About Tap," 2016).

While tap water is inexpensive and readily available, an increasing number of consumers are choosing bottled water over tap water. In fact, due to bottled water popularity, it is now a multi-million dollar industry ("The Benefits of Drinking Bottled Water," 2013). Bottled water's

main selling point is convenience. Bottled water provides consumers with a portable and convenient way to drink water on the run. It is easily stored and benefits greatly in times of disastrous events and emergencies. Due to its purification process, the perception is that bottled water tastes better than tap water ("Bottled Water vs. Tap water," n.d.).

There are several types of bottled water. Artesian water is water collected from a well that taps into an underground layer. An example of bottled artesian water is the brand Fiji. Distilled water is water that has been boiled and re-condensed. The brands Glaceau and Smartwater are examples of bottled distilled water. Purified water is water that comes from any source, but has been filtered and processed to remove impurities. The popular brands Aquafina and Dasani are both examples of bottled purified water. Sparkling water is the same as carbonated water, which contains dissolved carbon dioxide gas. An example of bottled sparkling water is Perrier. Spring water is water that is collected from a spring or through an underground formation. Nestle and Evian are examples of bottled spring water ("Knowing Where Your Bottled Water Comes From," 2012).

The majority of tap water comes from rivers, lakes and streams. A smaller percentage of water comes from groundwater. Water collected from these sources most likely contains toxins and environmental pollutants, such as lead, radon, petroleum spills, and industrial chemicals. Although city tap water is treated and filtrated, chlorine and fluoride are added to further treat the water. Chlorine acts as a disinfectant and kills bacteria, while fluoride prevents tooth decay. In many cases, even after all of these processes are completed, the water is not completely free from environmental pollutants and toxins. In fact, chlorine is likely to cause a negative reaction to the organic chemicals already present in the water. This

negative reaction can form new elements that may act as carcinogens (Perse, 2007). Fluoride also raises concerns; it is linked to a number of health problems like nutrient deficiencies, kidney diseases, and diabetes.

The most common toxin found in tap water is lead. Lead is a toxic metal and a very strong poison ("Lead Poisoning," 2016). Lead enters drinking water from pipe corrosion. When the water has low mineral content or high acidity, it contributes to the corrosion of pipes and fixtures ("Basic Information About Lead in Drinking Water," 2016). Lead build-up can cause major problems in the body. Lead circulating in the human body can cause serious damage to the brain, red blood cells, and the nervous system. Pregnant women and children are at the greatest risk of major health problems when exposed to lead. Lead poisoning can cause blindness, behavior problems, kidney and liver damage, mental retardation, physical growth problems, and even death (Gould, 2009).

Bottled water is convenient but has a negative impact on the environment. Bottled water produces tons of plastic waste per year that ends up in landfills or endlessly spinning in the world's major oceans. Water bottles are made of recyclable polyethylene terephthalate (PET) plastic; however, less than half percent of the plastic bottles are actually recycled. Peculiarly, PET's don't biodegrade; they simplify into tiny fragments. Those tiny fragments over time turn into toxins that contaminate soil, pollute waterways, and make animals sick. Millions of barrels of oil are used each year to transport and produce water bottles. It takes three times the amount of water to produce the bottle as it does to fill it (Schriever, 2013). Certainly, these resources can be used more sensibly in areas around the world where they are needed. In fact, the underprivileged parts of the world do not have access to clean water and call the growing

acclaim about bottled water a disgraceful luxury (Lee, 2016). A large amount of bottled water also comes from drought-stricken regions. These areas cannot really afford to pump millions of gallons of water out of the ground every year. Despite this known fact, water bottle industries continue to pump water anyway (Scheller, 2015).

Bottled water is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA safety standards are not as stringent as the EPA safety standards. Water bottlers are not required to disclose where their water comes from, how it is treated, and what it contains. Some bottled water companies do not go through the FDA safety process at all. Bottled water is regulated as packaged food rather than packaged water (Braff, 2016).

Bottled water is not a good value. Bottled water cost two thousand times as much as tap water. The cost of bottled water includes the bottle itself, the labeling, transporting, and advertisement. Strangely, consumers spend two thousand times more for bottled water than tap water, yet they lack knowledge about exactly what the bottled water contains. This is partly due to misleading labels and marketing. Bottled water is marketed to make consumers feel like it is as pure as can be, when in fact, a large percentage of bottled water comes straight from a municipal water supply (Houlihan, 2009).

Both bottled water and tap water have great advantages and concerning disadvantages. While tap water is inexpensive and readily available, bottled water is convenient and tastes better. Tap water concerns are mainly toxins, chlorine, and fluoride. Bottled water definitely has a negative impact on the environment and is very costly. Misleading labels and concerns are also major concerns affiliated with bottled water. It seems the better choice is drinking tap water. Another great idea is filtering tap water, which is an added safety measure. Drinking

tap water would be the alternative to contributing to the pollution and wasted resources associated with bottled water. Overall, drinking filtered tap water is better and safer.

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