

Misinformation in the United States about Bottled Water

In the past couple of decades, bottled water has become increasingly popular in the United States. Most Americans believe that bottled water is safer to drink than tap water out of the faucet, and the portability of disposable plastic bottles is also very popular. According to the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), bottled water sales have tripled in the past decade with Americans now spending about four billion dollars a year on bottled water (Olson). Part of this sales boost is attributable to bottled water companies displaying ads depicting crystal-clear springs and high mountain geysers as their bottled water sources. This marketing capitalizes on the widespread concern about the safety of tap water. In reality, however, bottled water rules are not much more stringent than those used for tap water. NRDC completed an in-depth, four-year study of the bottled water industry, addressing its bacterial and chemical contamination problems. The reality is that Americans are generally misinformed about bottled water, this mainly being due to the savvy marketing strategies of the corporations that produce bottled water.

The NRDC's study reviewed information on bottled water and the sources from which it comes from. The study assesses the Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) and the fifty states' practices addressing bottled water safety as well as analyzing both government and academic bottled water testing results. Additionally, the study compared the FDA's rules with some international bottled water standards as well as with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) rules concerning tap water. After the NRDC also lab tested over a thousand bottles of 103 varieties of bottled water originating from California, the District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, New York, and Texas, they came to various conclusions regarding the actual purity of bottled water.

A large problem with most bottle water is that the much of bottled water's advertising is highly misleading. For example, the NRDC study found that a brand of "spring water" that had on its bottle a picture of mountains and a lake actually was sourcing its bottled water from a well in a facility parking lot. The well was nearby a hazardous waste dump and was often contaminated with industrial chemicals at levels higher than the FDA's standards. Government and industry estimates indicate that at least 25 percent of bottled water is actually bottled tap water. Some estimates are as high as 40 percent. This is interesting counting considering that Americans spend from over 240 to as much as 10,000 times more per gallon on bottled water than they do for on tap water (Olson).

Commented [AHall1]: Remember formatting here. Needs to be double spaced and probably MLA style. Not sure how picky she is though.

Commented [AHall2]: Phrase seems too bulky/awkward. Consider revising: "bottled water is safer than drinking tap water from the faucet."

Commented [AHall3]: When did they complete the study?

Commented [AHall4]: "which"?

Commented [AHall5]: "it" instead of repeating "bottled water" again. Seems to be repetitive, but that could just be me.

Commented [AHall6]: This is awkward. Consider revising: United States', or, U.S.'

Commented [AHall7]: This seems very wordy and slightly confusing. You have several different organizations/subjects within the sentence. Consider making into two separate sentences.

Commented [AHall8]: Who? Be specific. Consider joining with previous sentence.

Commented [AHall9]: Consider further explanation on what the problem is, or, rephrase like so.

Commented [AHall10]: Use "which"

Commented [AHall11]: Switch these: "was actually"

Commented [AHall12]: What kind of facility?

Commented [AHall13]: Consider revising: "close to" or "near." As it sits currently, it seems awkward.

Commented [AHall14]: Do you need to say "bottled" again here? Seems redundant.