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Core Spirit / Corespirit.com
CEO & Website Publisher
London, United Kingdom
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Dear Core Spirit CEO & Website Publisher,

I'm writing in regard to "[6 Dirty Secrets of Bottled Water](#)," an unauthored article published on www.corespirit.com, which contains several inaccurate and false statements about bottled water. We ask that you review the information provided below and update your article to more accurately reflect the facts about bottled water.

Incorrect statement: Bottled water is less regulated than tap water.

Correction: As a packaged food product, bottled water is strictly regulated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Federal law requires that FDA bottled water regulations be as protective of the public health as standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for tap water. In fact, in some cases, such as lead, the FDA bottled water regulations are more stringent than the EPA tap water standards. In addition, researchers have estimated 19.5 million cases of acute gastrointestinal illness are caused by tap water each year. Read more: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18020305>. In contrast, a survey of state bottled water regulatory authorities, conducted by the Government Accountability Office (GAO), found there were zero outbreaks of foodborne illness from bottled water over a five-year period. <http://thefactsaboutwater.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/CSA-FINAL-060117.pdf>

Incorrect statement: The truth is bottled water is essentially the same tap water you can get at home.

Correction: There are many different types of bottled water. Spring water, sparkling water, artesian water, and mineral water all come from protected groundwater sources. Purified bottled water products often use public water systems as their source. It is important to note, however, that purified bottled water is not "just tap water in a bottle." Once the tap water enters the bottled water plant, several processes are employed to ensure that it meets the FDA Standard of Identity for purified water. Those treatments can include ozonation, reverse osmosis, distillation, or de-ionization. The finished water product is then placed in a bottle under sanitary conditions and sold to the consumer. Purified bottled water is therefore very different from original tap water. If a bottled water product's source is a public water system and the finished bottled water does not meet the FDA Standard of Identity for purified or sterile water, the product label must disclose the public water system source.

Your article also falsely claims that bottled water products contain trihalomethanes. These disinfectant byproducts are often found in chlorinated tap water but not in bottled water.

Trihalomethanes are caused by adding chlorine to the source water used by public water systems to produce tap water. As mentioned above, bottled water companies that use public water sources to make purified water must employ one or more treatments that would remove any trihalomethanes that were in the water before it is bottled and sold to consumers.

Incorrect statement: Bottled water is a rip off.

Correction: As a popular retail food product, bottled water is available at many differing price points. According to the Beverage Marketing Corporation (BMC), the average wholesale price per gallon of domestic non-sparkling bottled water was \$1.11 in 2015. However, BMC also notes that research shows consumers most often tend to buy bottled water in bulk from supermarkets or large discount retailers, where they purchase it in cost-saving volume.

Your article also falsely states that in most cases bottled water tastes the same as tap water. There are many different types of bottled water to meet the varying tastes of consumers. Some consumers prefer the taste of bottled spring water or artesian water, while others like purified bottled water. However, the one thing that all bottled waters have in common is that, unlike tap water, they don't use chlorine to disinfect their products. In fact, people often choose bottled water instead of tap water because it does not have the taste and smell of chlorine.

Incorrect statement: Plastic water bottles are dangerous to your health.

Correction: As with all food packaging materials, bottled water containers must be made from FDA-approved food contact substances. This means the plastic and glass containers used for bottled water products have undergone FDA scrutiny prior to being available for use in the marketplace. FDA has determined that containers used by the bottled water industry are safe for use with food and beverage products—including bottled water—and they do not pose a health risk to consumers. You falsely state that most plastic bottles contain bisphenol A (BPA). In fact, BPA is not a chemical component of PET plastic, which is commonly used for small, portable 16.9 (half-liter) and 20 and 24 ounce bottled water products. Moreover, regulatory agencies in several countries and the FDA have ruled favorably on the safety of BPA. The consensus among these international regulatory agencies is that the current levels of exposure to BPA through food packaging do not pose a health risk. You also falsely state that plastic bottled water bottles contain phthalates. While the PET acronym stands for Polyethylene Terephthalate, there are no phthalates in PET plastic.

Incorrect statement: Bottled water is dangerous for the environment.

Correction: It is false to say that bottled water is dangerous for the environment. In fact, bottled water has the smallest environmental footprint of all packaged beverages. All bottled water containers are 100-percent recyclable, and, as an industry, we support strong community recycling initiatives and recognize that a continued focus on increased recycling is important for everyone. In addition, bottled water containers are the most common item in curbside recycling programs, recycled at a rate of 50.9 percent. And the industry is always looking for ways to strengthen existing recycling programs and help to expand recycling efforts ever further. However, even when they are not properly recycled, bottled water containers make up only 3.3 percent of all drink packaging in U.S. landfills. Glass containers make up 66.7 percent, soda containers make up 13.3 percent, and aluminum cans make up 7.9 percent. See this [drink packaging in U.S. landfills infographic](#). Bottled water also has the lowest water- and energy-use

ratios of all packaged beverages. On average, it takes only 1.32 liters of water to produce 1 liter of finished bottled water (including the liter of water consumed), which is the lowest water-use ratio of any packaged beverage product. And on average, only 0.24 mega joules of energy are used to produce 1 liter of bottle of water. And continual light-weighting of PET plastic packaging has seen the average weight drop to 9.25 grams per 16.9 ounce single-serve container. That is almost one-third less than the amount of PET it takes to make soda and other drink containers, which need to be thicker due to carbonation and manufacturing processes and weigh, on average, 23.9 grams. According to the Beverage Marketing Corporation (BMC), between 2000 and 2014, the average weight of a 16.9-ounce (half-liter) PET plastic bottled water container declined 51 percent. This resulted in a savings of 6.2 billion pounds of PET resin since 2000.

Incorrect statement: Most bottled waters add fluoride, which is a very dangerous toxic chemical.

Correction: Most bottled water products **do not** have added fluoride in them. Fluoride is present in many foods and beverages, and almost all toothpaste contains fluoride. Too much exposure to fluoride can lead to a condition called fluorosis, which results in stains to the teeth. Too little fluoride can cause an increase in dental caries, particularly in children. Consumers should therefore look at how much fluoride they are receiving as part of an overall diet and should contact a health-care or dental-care provider for their recommendation. Not all consumers want fluoride in their bottled water, but for those who do, a number of IBWA member companies produce bottled water with added fluoride.

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You've probably heard by now that in 2016 bottled water outsold carbonated soft drinks (by volume) to become the No.1 packaged beverage in the United States. Americans are making greater efforts to live a better lifestyle by choosing healthier foods and beverages. Drinking water in all forms – tap, bottled, or filtered – should therefore be encouraged. With the high rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease in our on-the-go society, bottled water provides a safe, healthy, convenient beverage choice. Discouraging people from choosing this healthy drink option is not in the public interest.

Thank you for reading and giving my concerns your attention. I kindly ask that you update your online story to more accurately reflect the facts about bottled water.

Sincerely,

Jill Culora
Vice President of Communications
International Bottled Water Association