



CAMPAIGNING TO KEEP  
WATER AS A PUBLIC TRUST

## **Fact Over Fiction: Why pick tap over bottled water?**

### **Bottled water is for the rich**

Bottled water is not necessarily safer or cleaner than tap water, yet it costs up to 10,000 times more. Bottled water is a choice only for those who can afford it. The rich often buy bottled water and ignore the decaying conditions of public water systems, leaving the disadvantaged to deal with their water source.

### **Bottled water is NOT safer**

Approximately one-third of the bottled water brands recently tested by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) violated, in at least one sample, an enforceable standard or exceeded microbiological-purity guidelines.

### **Bottled water often carries misleading labeling**

Approximately 25% of bottled water is merely tap water. Rules allow manufacturers to call their product “spring water” even if it has been chemically treated. In one case in the NRDC test, water from an industrial parking lot next to a hazardous waste site was marketed as “spring water” from a pristine source.

### **Bottling water harms the environment**

The water bottling industry profits from the sale of this common resource at the expense of the environment. Pumping can dry out springs, destroy habitats, devastate ecosystems, and drain aquifers. Additionally, hundreds of thousands of tons of non-recycled plastic water bottles sit in landfills worldwide. Less than 5-percent of the 40 billion pounds of plastic produced every year are actually recycled. Plastics are now the fastest growing sector of the waste stream and presently take up more than 25 percent of the volume of material sent to landfills every year.

### **Who are the major water bottling companies?**

Perrier Group owned by Nestle is twice as big as the next largest water-bottling corporation. Nestle owns approximately 30% of the bottled water market. Danone controls 15% of the market, with Pepsi and Coca-Cola as runner-ups. The bottled water industry is currently worth US\$22 billion and some experts estimate a growth potential of 30% annually.