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Save Money, Ditch Bottled Water for Reusable Water Bottles

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We've all purchased water packaged in a disposable plastic container – it's a trend that's gaining popularity in our country. Not only is this an expensive habit, it's also incredibly unnecessary since most water systems in the US produce quality drinking water. Worse, the manufacture and disposal of these plastic bottles is causing some pretty big environmental problems, too. One of our goals here at Hearts is to bust myths that underpin our consumer habits so that we can empower people like you to wield your purchasing power for good. When it comes to bottled water, there are plenty of misunderstandings. So let's bust some bottled water myths to help you create a greener lifestyle for yourself.

Quick Guide: Money and Water Wasted on Plastic Bottles

- **It takes 4 gallons of water to bottle 1 gallon of water:** Manufacturing the plastic bottles that hold our water actually consumes more water than the bottles actually hold! Here's how it breaks down:
 - 2 gallons of water are used to produce one 1-gallon plastic bottle.^[i]
 - 2 gallons of water are used to purify one gallon of water.^[ii]
 - Total: four gallons of water for every one gallon of water packaged in plastic.
- **Bottled water second only to sodas:** The bottled water sector (29% of the total liquid beverages market) packages 8.5 billion gallons every year, second only to carbonated soft drinks.^[iii]
- **10,000 times more expensive than tap:** Bottled water is up to 10,000 times more expensive than drinking tap water.^[iv] Americans buy 2.3 gallons of bottled water each monthly at a cost of \$833 million collectively.^[v] ^[vi] Disposing of plastic water bottles costs our nation \$5.8 million per month.^[vii]
- **Bottled water means foreign oil dependence:** 30 million barrels of oil annually go into making bottles for water, and transporting them costs another 54 million barrels of oil.^[viii] ^[ix]
- **We're not great plastic water bottle recyclers:** Of the 45 million bottles we consume daily, 88% are *not* recycled which means 1.14 billion plastic water bottles enter our landfills monthly.^[x] ^[xi]



- **2 million cars' worth of emissions to produce bottled water:** Producing bottled water requires 2,000 times the energy it takes to produce tap water, which is a carbon footprint equivalent to 2 million cars. ^[xii] ^[xiii]

Take Action! Limit Your Use of Disposable Water Bottles

1. **How much will you save by drinking tap water?** Use the [Bottled Water Cost Calculator](#) to find your potential financial savings by choosing tap water. Example: If you were to replace 150 bottles of water per year with tap water, you'd save \$225!
2. **Test and filter your tap water:** If you have concerns about the quality of water in your community, check out our guide to switching to [tap water](#) for information on how to test and set up a water filtration system at home to ensure safe, clean drinking water.
3. **Purchase stylish reusable water bottles:** There are plenty of reusable water containers that are a durable and stylish way to replace plastic water bottles, including [Klean Kanteen Classic](#), [Camelbak](#), [Nalgene](#), and [Bottle](#). Just be sure to purchase a water bottle that is free of BPA (Bisphenol-A), a chemical used to coat the inside of polycarbonate and some metal bottles. BPA has been linked to health concerns in humans animals related to hormone disruption.
4. **Encourage your office building or schools to stop the sale of bottled water:** You can do your part in eliminating plastic water bottle pollution by having bottled water banned from canteens, cafeterias, and vending machines. Tell your colleagues or classmates about the unnecessary cost of bottled water and about the benefits for the environment. To get campaign organizational tips, check out these guides to banning bottled water: [Unbottle it! A guide on how to obtain a bottled water ban in your community](#), [Think Outside the Bottle Student Organizing Guide](#), [Green Your Thirst Ban Bottled Water Tool Kit](#).
5. **Be a voice for public management of and funding for municipal water systems:** You can push for your local government to allocate funds for the proper maintenance of water systems so that bottled water becomes redundant in your community. Tell your elected representatives that you want better municipal water filtration and testing. More

importantly, encourage your state to [establish a bottle bill](#) that places a deposit on plastic bottles to ensure they get recycled.

Dig Deeper: Benefits of Drinking Tap Water to Limit Bottled Water Use

- Check out the [Hearts iHeart Change](#) campaign and how you can help the poor obtain clean drinking water through [Generosity Water](#).
- Find out about polyethylene (the material that plastic bottles are made of) and it's carbon footprint of at least 13 pounds per pound of plastic via [Plastic bags and plastic bottles – CO2 emissions during their lifetime](#).
- Check out this article from the National Geographic Society on the [reasons why tap water is better than bottled water](#).
- Find out how poor quality water kills people in extremely poor countries all over the world via the [Living Water](#) organization.

Images by [Capeside](#), [epSos.de](#) and [cogdogblog](#)



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