

## NSW town pushed to ban bottled water

By environment reporter **Shane McLeod** (<http://www.abc.net.au/profiles/content/s1888086.htm?site=news>) for AM

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([http://www.abc.net.au/reslib/200704/r136503\\_462956.jpg](http://www.abc.net.au/reslib/200704/r136503_462956.jpg))

Vote tonight: Bundanoon is pondering a ban on bottled water  
(ABC News: Giulio Saggin)

**Audio: NSW's Southern Highlands to ban plastic bottles (AM)**

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**Map: Bundanoon 2578**

([http://www.abc.net.au/news/maps/map.htm?lat=-34.6601&long=150.298&caption=Bundanoon 2578](http://www.abc.net.au/news/maps/map.htm?lat=-34.6601&long=150.298&caption=Bundanoon%202578))

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**A town in the New South Wales southern highlands hopes to become the first community in Australia to ban the sale of bottled water.**

Bundanoon is probably best known for its annual Scottish cultural festival. But now the town of 2,500 people hopes to make a name for itself for another canny decision.

Bundanoon businessman Huw Kingston suggested the ban after a company applied to pump water out of a local aquifer to supply the bottled market.

"I put a little article - 'Does Bundanoon have the bottle to go bottled water free?' - in our local newsletter. I guess we have gone on from there," he said.

The suggestion won the support of local businesses.

They are proposing to replace plastic bottles of water on their shop shelves with reusables and then offer directions to filtered water fountains that will be installed on the main street.

Tonight that idea will be put to local residents at a community meeting.

Mr Kingston believes there will be widespread support.

"I think there is an overwhelming opposition to the marketing scam that is stilled bottled water," he said.

Around the world other cities have taxed bottled water - in some places, local officials have been banned from using taxpayers funds to buy it.

Environmentalist Jon Dee from activist group Do Something believes Bundanoon could be the first town to ban it entirely.

"Huge amounts of resources are used to extract, bottle and transport that bottled water, and much of the package ends up as litter or landfill," he said.

"So environmentally it makes no sense and that is what we are trying to do in Bundanoon, is show that a community can live without single use bottled water."

Mr Dee, who was behind the campaign that saw plastic bags banned in the Tasmanian town of Coles Bay, says other towns around the country would not find it hard to follow Bundanoon's lead.

"If Bundanoon can ban bottled water, well many other towns and communities around Australia will also consider their usage of bottled water," he said.

"And at the very least, if they don't ban it then at least they will reduce their usage of it and in doing so reduce the half a billion dollars a year that Australians are spending on bottled water and not just save money but save the environment too."

Mr Kingston says visitors to Bundanoon will not be set upon if they are seen sipping water from a plastic bottle.

"We are fairly civilised people down here. Nobody is going to get lynched for carrying a bottle of prepackaged water down the main

street of Bundanoon," he said.

But he hopes the ban will make them think twice about how they quench their thirst.