



ater [Read here](#), BusinessWeek - Pressure rises against bottled water - [Read here](#), Detroit Free Press - Uncar



Press Release

THOUSANDS PLEDGE TO THINK OUTSIDE THE BOTTLE

Cities, celebrities, students, religious communities and environmental and corporate accountability organizations urge support for public water systems

For immediate release: October 10, 2007

Contact: Nick Guroff, 617-695-2525, nguroff@stopcorporateabuse.org (Also see press contacts below)

A broad range of national and local organizations, cities, celebrities, student groups and communities of faith launched the Think Outside Bottle Pledge today calling on people to choose public tap over bottled water.

The Pledge supports the efforts of local officials to invest and build confidence in public water systems.

Momentum has been growing over the last year for cities and consumers to reevaluate corporate control of water sources, including city water systems. The explosive growth of the bottled water industry, fueled by misleading advertising, has contributed to a loss of confidence in public water systems. [i]

However, scientific studies have shown that bottled water is on average no safer than tap water, and may sometimes be less safe, containing elevated levels of arsenic, bacteria and other contaminants. [ii]

What's more, up to 40 percent of bottled water comes from the same source as tap water, which is highly regulated for its safety to consumers. [iii] In contrast, the bottled water industry is regulated by the FDA, which lacks the capacity to fully monitor bottled water plants and largely relies on bottlers to police themselves. [iv]

This summer the U.S. Conference of Mayors passed a resolution, with leadership from the mayors of San Francisco, Salt Lake City, and Minneapolis, supporting municipal water systems. U.S. consumers currently spend \$15 billion a year on bottled water. [v] At the same time, there is a \$22 billion funding gap between what cities need to spend on water infrastructure and the money available to them. [vi]

In the face of shortfalls, cities in the U.S. and around the world are turning increasingly to private corporations to manage public water systems – sometimes at great expense to the public and to the overall quality of service. [vii]

Bottled water also takes a toll on the environment, and city budgets. Last year, at least four billion pounds of plastic bottles ended up in city waste streams. [viii] It can cost cities more than \$70 million in dumping and incineration fees alone. [ix] Furthermore, making bottles to meet Americans' demand for bottled water required the equivalent of more than 17 million barrels of oil last year and generated more than 2.5 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions. [x]

The Pledge drive will continue over the coming months and be used to educate consumers about why they should choose the tap over the bottle.

For press events [click here](#).

Quotes from Supporters:

"Getting good honest information to the public through aggressive, proactive efforts like the Think Outside The Bottle campaign, has clearly improved the consciousness of people around this country. People are making better decisions. It's like that light bulb goes on that says, 'Oh my gosh, we got sucked into this pattern of buying bottled water without thinking a whole lot about it. We need to be more responsible, more conscious about the impacts of our efforts, and be part of the solution rather than part of the problem.'" – Mayor Ross C. "Rocky" Anderson, Mayor, Salt Lake City, UT

"Here in Boston, we're proud not only to support the pledge, but, in fact, we feel as though Mayor Menino helped write the Pledge." - James Hunt, Chief of Environmental & Energy Services in the Office of the Mayor of Boston

"The Franciscan Federation has been supporting the Think Outside The Bottle campaign for a couple years now, and the pledge now today, because we are called by our faith stance and our moral views to do so. For us it's a moral matter of environmental stewardship." – Sister Sharon Dillon, Former Executive Director of the Franciscan Federation of the United States

"Water is a profound spiritual symbol for Christians. This essential life resource should not be commodified, nor should access be limited. Already, privatization of water has limited access to persons in parts of the world. We

support this campaign and all efforts to ensure water for all." - Andrew Kang Bartlett, Presbyterian Hunger Program

"Between our 2 restaurants and the nightclub we have 55 employees and we serve over 1000 guests a week and it's been really educational and exciting for us to work with our staff and our guests to really understand the issues involved with the Think Outside The Bottle campaign." - Katherine Manzier, Cofounder and CEO of Bella Luna Restaurant and The Milky Way Lounge and Lanes

"Bottled water allows corporations to control the price of the water we drink. Water is a fundamental human right and should not be treated like a commodity sold to those who can afford to pay the market price." Ruth Caplan, Alliance for Democracy

Alliance for Democracy Contact: Ruth Caplan, rcaplan@iqc.org, 202-244-0561

"Bottled water corporations are changing the way that we think about water. We're changing it back. Today, thousands of people and dozens of organizations are launching the Think Outside the Bottle Pledge. People are standing up to support the efforts of local officials who prioritize strong public water systems over bottled water profits. They are standing up to choose the tap over the bottle." - Gigi Kellett, Corporate Accountability International

Corporate Accountability International Contact: Nick Guroff, nguroff@stopcorporateabuse.org, 617-965-2525

"The bottled water industry is built on marketing and false propaganda. It is an industry that is destructive of our environment and has a devastating impact on rural communities where they are located." - Arlene Kanno, Concerned Citizens of Newport (CCN)

Concerned Citizens of Newport (CCN) Contact: Arlene Kanno, akanno8@gmail.com, 608-253-7266

"Water is a public trust, it belongs to everyone. But global water corporations are seeking to cash in on this precious resource. People around the world are rejecting the idea that water can be a commodity, including by thinking outside the bottle." - Maude Barlow, National Chairperson, Council of Canadians.

"Bottled water generally is no cleaner, or safer, or healthier than tap water," said Food & Water Watch Executive Director Wenonah Hauter. "But just kicking the bottle in favor of the tap is not enough. It's time for Congress to establish a clean water trust fund that would give communities the financial help they need to invest in healthy and safe drinking water for every American and for future generations." Food & Water Watch's new report, "Clear Waters: Why America Needs a Clean Water Trust Fund," is available at:

<http://www.foodandwaterwatch.org/water/clearwaters> - Jennifer Mueller, Food and Water Watch

Food and Water Watch Contact: Jennifer Mueller, 202-797-6553

"Why would a member of Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation buy bottled water when we can get it free from the tap." - Terry Swier, Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation.

Michigan Citizens for Water Conservation Contact: Terry Swier, 231-972-8856

"Today, it is clear the role of bottled water, and the bottled water industry, must be brought under the public policy microscope. Our Inside the Bottle campaign aims to transform awareness into action, to curb the bottled water trend and to support public water systems" - Zoe Maggio, Polaris

Polaris Contact: Zoe Maggio, zoe@polarisinstitute.org, (613) 237-1717 ext. 104, Toll free: (866) 346-6602 ext. 104

"We've been thinking outside the bottle since 2001 when a local bottled water company decided to steal our water and ship it overseas. We feel that it is unacceptable for profit to be made at the expense of the health of our community and the environment." - Olivia Zink, Save Our Groundwater

Save Our Groundwater contact: Olivia Zink, olivia.zink@gmail.com, 603-661-8621

"Climate recovery hinges on many things, including public rejection of false solutions of privatization of water services and the commodification of water itself." - Vicki Lee, Chair of the Corporate Accountability Committee, Sierra club

Sierra Club contact: Vicki Lee, Chair of the Corporate Accountability Committee, 510-741-1201

"When the multi-national corporations come in to take over the water distribution program they make the mistake of treating water as a profit-driven commodity instead of a human right, and because of this misinterpretation, the people suffer, often going thirsty due to their inability to meet the high cost of water." - Bryan Yunis, student at College of St. Solastica, Deluth, MN

Student Campaign for Child Survival Contact: Bryan Yunis, student at College of St. Solastica, Deluth, MN, johnnybroom@gmail.com, 612-636-7796

Boston Latin School Youth Climate Action Network Contact: Cate Arnold, catearnold@aol.com, 617-688-2262

Earth Policy Institute Contact: Janet Larsen, 202.496.9290 x.14

International Labor Rights Fund Contact: Trina Tocco, trina.tocco@ilrf.org, 202-347-4100 x103

New American Dream Contact: Tim Sanchez, tim@newdream.org, 301-891-3683

Ruckus Society Contact: Celeste Faison, 510.763.7078

Vermont Natural Resources Center Contact: Jon Groveman, VNRC Water Program Director - 802-223-2328 ext. 119

- [i]U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. "Analysis and Findings of The Gallup Organization's Drinking Water Customer Satisfaction Survey," August 6, 2003.
- Britton, Charles R., Richard K. Ford and David, E.R. Gay. "The Market for Bottled Water in a "Water Rich" State," The Forum of the Association for Arid Lands Studies, Volume XXII, 2006.
- [ii]Olson, Erik. "Bottled Water: Pure Drink or Pure Hype?" Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), March 1999, <http://www.nrdc.org/water/drinking/bw/exesum.asp>. Accessed 8 August 2007.
- [iii]Olson, *Ibid*; Todd, Heather. "State of the Industry: Bottled Water Report—Riding the Wave," *Beverage World*, May 2005. Supplemented by internal analysis (using data from the second source listed here) that shows the North American market share commanded by major tap-water sourced brands well exceeds 25%, not including many smaller brands also using tap water.
- [iv]Gleick, Peter H. *The World's Water: The Biennial Report on Freshwater Resources*, Vols. 4 and 5. Island Press, 2004/2006.
- [v]Fishman, Charles. "Message in a Bottle," *Fast Company*, July 2007. (Note: *Fast Company* cites figures from Beverage Digest, a beverage industry trade magazine – www.beverage-digest.com)
- [vi]"The Clean Water and Drinking Water Gap Analysis." Office of Water, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Sept. 30, 2002. www.epa.gov/safewater/gapreport.pdf
- [vii]Lobina, Emanuele and David Hall. "Problems with private water concessions: a review of experience," Public Services International Research Unit, University of Greenwich, June 2003; Warner, Mildred and Bel, Germa. "Local Privatization and Costs: Theoretical Expectations vs. Empirical Evidence." Working paper, Cornell University and University of Barcelona, 2007.
- [viii]Gitlitz, Jennifer and Pat Franklin. "Water, Water Everywhere: The growth of non-carbonated beverage containers in the United States. *Container Recycling Institute*, February 2007.
- [ix]Repa, Edward W. "NSWMA's 2005 Tip Fee Survey," *National Solid Waste Management Association Research Bulletin*, March 2005.
- [x]Pacific Institute. Fact sheet – "Bottled Water and Energy". www.pacinst.org/topics/water_and_sustainability/bottled_water/bottled_water_and_energy.pdf; Accessed 4 October 2007.

[Home](#) | [Learn More](#) | [Pledge Kit](#) | [Endorsers](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Think Outside the Bottle is a campaign of Corporate Accountability International