

Bottled Water

Healthy Living or Toxic Accumulation?

While the bottled water industry wants us to think drinking water from plastics is the epitome of healthy living—the reality is quite different.

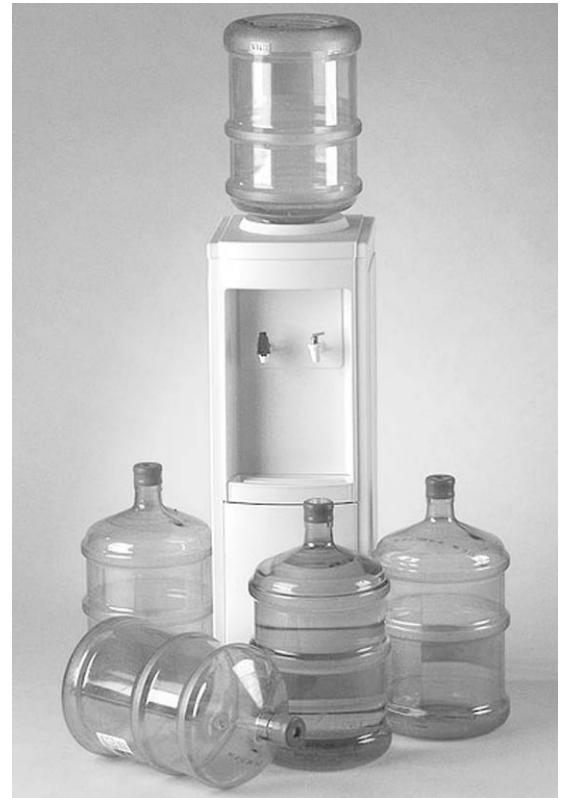
Labels on bottled water conjure up images of pure mountain streams and ice-capped mountains. But what are you really buying when you take that bottle of water off the shelf? Have you stopped to think about the plastic bottles? The plastic is made from petroleum and natural gas to produce chemical compounds, called resins. From creation of the plastic to formation of the plastic bottles, to storage of water in the plastic bottles, to final disposal, these resins create a world-wide toxic trail of land, air and water pollution—most of all, pollution of our bodies.

Bodies Harmed Without our Consent

Tests of human blood, urine and hair document all types of toxic industrial chemicals—flame-retardants, Teflon, pesticides, and plastics—that accumulate in our bodies.

Plastic water bottles contribute to this total body burden. The most harmful chemicals include phthalates and Bisphenol A. Phthalates are found in PVC—Polyvinyl Chloride (#3) used for products like medical equipment, children's toys, and plastic wrap. PET (#1), the plastic most widely used for bottled water, is also a chemical compound with phthalate but there is not yet clear science about whether this is harmful or not. Bisphenol A is used to make polycarbonate plastic (#7) large jugs for home and office water coolers and for Nalgene bottles.

Recently, antimony, a chemical used in PET, was



Anyone for a nice cool sip of Bisphenol A?

discovered to leach from the bottle right after being capped; and after 3 months, the level was 175 times higher than before bottling. Experts say more research is needed on antimony which is toxic and in high amounts may cause death.

Animal research and human studies document how these chemicals disrupt normal hormone system function, because of similarity with our body's own estrogen. This extra dose particularly impacts the precise timing and hormone signaling needed for normal fetal development. Alarming, tests of amniotic fluid, umbilical-cord blood of newborns, and breast milk show contamination. Not even the smallest, most vulnerable of us escape!

This new bio-monitoring science shows that not only a single chemical, but the cumulative impact of many chemicals in our bodies from conception to death, cause risk of long-term health problems and contribute to well-documented trends in disease.

This evidence shows:

- abnormal fetal development resulting in learning disabilities and hyperactivity in children
- bio-accumulation over a life-time leading to dementia and Parkinson's-like diseases
- disruption of hormone function, including thyroid; and insulin resistance related to diabetes
- genital abnormalities in boys, including DNA damage in sperm and low sperm counts; prostate cancer
- fertility problems and endometriosis in women, including miscarriage and pre-term birth
- early puberty in girls likely creating a pre-condition for breast cancer

Take Action: Stop Corporate Pollution Now and for Future Generations

- Support state laws to ban the use of phthalates and Bisphenol A such as AB 319 in California, which would ban their use in products, used by children under age 3.
- Expose corporate lobbying against such bans. In California, the petro-chemical-plastics industry is vigorously opposing AB 319
- If corporations announce they are voluntarily phasing out harmful chemicals, make sure they are not substituting other harmful carcinogenic and toxic chemicals.
- For action at the community level to bar corporate persons from harming the health and lives of real persons, study the "Corporate Chemical Trespass Ordinance" at the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund website that says in part "The deposition of toxic chemicals or potentially toxic chemicals within the body of any resident of Liberty Township is declared a form of trespass, and is hereby prohibited." <http://www.celfd.org>
- Use opensecrets.org to research and expose industry campaign contributions. www.opensecrets.org/
- Debunk the myth that bottled water is the healthy alternative!

For the latest science and more information see: Our Stolen Future, www.ourstolenfuture.org/ Environmental Health News, www.environmentalhealthnews.org/ Center for Health, Environment & Justice, www.chej.org/ and their BeSAFE PVC Plastic Campaign www.besafenet.com/pvc/