

Every time I go to a place, and see bottles of plain water, lined up next to Fanta and Pepsi, one of the questions that flash in my head is just “WHY?”, “what’s the purpose?”. Did you know, fun fact: within Australia, any restaurant that serves alcohol to its customers must also provide “FREE” note that point, “FREE” water and if they refuse to do so, well then SUE THEM. Or else, I’m sure it won’t be that much of a pain, to just carry your own REUSABLE water bottle.

So in case you haven’t noticed, I’m here to address the long and ongoing issue of the plan to ban the production of bottled water. So, let’s make it quick and effective.

A whopping one MILLION plastic single-use water bottles are being purchased around the world every minute, just think about that... *CLICK YOUR FINGERS*, BAMM! – that’s some TWENTY THOUSAND BOTTLES SOLD! Think about the terrible contribution that Australia is making this very minute...second. Think about the actions that are making the green environment, POLLUTED environment. Think about the future of our planet, think... about Australia.

The time you take to throw away a plastic water bottle is merely a second. But the time it takes for it to ‘properly’, which I’ll get back to later, properly degrade is on average over four-hundred years. By which it can absorb organic pollutants such as BPA and PCBs. Now coming back to the word ‘properly’... everyone believes that plastic water bottles are made of completely recyclable material, which is true, and to be specific, they are made of PET plastics, a common branch of plastic materials. Although the point that most of us are unaware of is that they do not biodegrade but instead they photodegrade. Which means that they only breakdown into smaller fragments. In addition, over time other toxins also seep into its structure, which disrupts our waterways, the fertility of soil and most importantly the health of animals, some of which we EAT as well. And you may ask, why would any of this happen if we are recycling them? The answer: we are not recycling them, well not as nearly as much as we should be. And the result, they are ending up at landfills which is the last thing we all want.

Moving on, let’s do a small test... who here thinks that that the water contained within non-reusable plastic bottles is safer when compared to just plain old tap water? *Brief pause*. And now vice versa, who thinks that tap water is healthier? *Announce the results*

The consumption of water from plastic non-reusable bottles can directly affect your health. Recent research gives off signs that ‘safe’ and ‘clean’ bottled water, which is as indicated by their respective companies is not exactly as safe and clean. Increased traces of chemicals named phthalates were found by analysts. You may be asking yourself the question “SO, does that bother me?”. Because I SURE AM... Phthalates when consumed disrupt the hormones within our body, which in turn is harmful for the reproductive system of both men and women. These toxic chemicals trickle into the bottled water after as little as ten weeks of storage. Acting as a catalyst for this process, warm temperatures, which in this place is quite common, speeds up the process. These chemicals may also be present in tap water, depending on the place. But considering that Australia’s, and that too Melbourne’s water is undoubtedly one of the best in the world, I’m sure the number of phthalates present in our tap water is negligible, if not it’s a complete zero. However, it doesn’t just end there unfortunately, there are also chances of a consumer developing different types of cancers out of which some are life threatening. So you tell me... do we really need bottled water?

In addition, some of us easily fall into the trap of buying bottled water that are advertised as ‘premium’ or else ‘luxury’. But the water within is essentially NO different to the H₂O that runs out of conventional faucets. This statement is supported by the fact that most of the people failed to distinguish between bottled water and tap water while they participated in the blind taste test. Thus

you are almost paying 10,000 times the rate of tap water, just for the marketing schemes of multinational companies.

On the other hand, bottled water is easily accessible. Say if you are running a marathon, and whenever you are feeling dehydrated you simply pick up a plastic water bottle at the next check-point. Or for instance, if you are out for a jog and you are in desperate need for water, you would stop in at a milk bar and purchase a bottle of water. Though there are simpler solutions for cases of these sorts which the Australian government could implement.

- 1) Edible water bottle, small yet sufficient bubbles of water that's contained by a sea-weed based pouch which can either be nipped and drank from or can also be consumed as whole. This innovative creation made by the makers of Ooho water can prove to be a great alternative at events such as marathons.
- 2) Australia can build more drinking fountains across parks and streets that provides the same clean tap water as the ones at your house. Which again requires support from the government.

But ladies and gentlemen, I can tell you that we have a major flaw in our system of keeping the environment clean and it acts as a butterfly effect since the increased production of plastic bottled water can be harmful for the environment which in turn can pose health risks to us. So we have to blanket ban the production of plastic water bottles and to do so, we can use the same butterfly effect; as the change in ONE person can essentially lead to tomorrow becoming a safer environment, healthier wellbeing. while having the same level of accessibility as bottled water. Let's change for the better face of Australia.