



June 24, 2008

Over the past few weeks the bottled water backlash has gained momentum internationally.

In Canada we are seeing a growing number of City Councils, School Boards and School Districts contemplating a ban on the purchase and sale of bottled water in City buildings and schools. The Polaris Institute has been helping city councilors and staff in a number of locations by providing information and materials regarding the problems with bottled water. Canadian cities are beginning to recognize the multiple environmental and social costs of bottled water. Through our continuing work with students and municipal officials, we are encouraging people to make a transition from awareness to action on this issue.

Presently the cities of Kitchener ON, London ON, Cambridge ON, Maple Ridge BC, Toronto, Waterloo ON, Ottawa, Nelson BC, Sault Ste Marie ON, Beaconsfield QC, Burnaby BC, Blue Mountains ON, St Catharines, and Altona MB are moving closer to adopting policies, or have already adopted policies that discourage the use of bottled water and promote the consumption of municipally supplied tap water.

In the United States, the 2008 US Mayors Conference in Miami passed a resolution that encourages US mayors to stop spending taxpayers dollars on bottled water. The resolution was submitted by 14 US mayors including the mayors from Boston, Chicago, New York and San Francisco. Our partner organization in the US, Corporate Accountability International (CAI), have been working with US mayors on this issue. Read CAI's press release [here](#).

The bottled water issue continues to garner media attention in the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand and Italy where city officials, activists and politicians of all levels are raising awareness about bottled water and pushing for action to promote the use of tap water.

The articles included below are a sampling of bottled water related news from the past month. A number of articles included here are from outside North America. This demonstrates the international scope of the growing bottled water backlash.

The Polaris Institute will continue to monitor the industry and provide you with news and analysis. For more information on our Inside the Bottle Campaign, please visit [www.insidethebottle.org](http://www.insidethebottle.org)

Editor's note: Beginning with this month, we will be distributing in-depth articles about the bottled water industry every 2 months, while continuing to provide you with a monthly sampling of news articles about the industry.

**Bottled water related articles from the past month. Click on the headlines to link to the complete article.**

[New Zealand] [Message in a bottle](#)

June 28, 2008, NZ Listener - Should New Zealand make residential rainwater tanks mandatory? With the worry of potential electricity shortages looming over winter, imagine being able to buy bottled electricity at the supermarket in case of an energy drought. Now imagine that bottled electricity is a thousand times the price of the electricity you plug into at home. It'd be barny – yet those are the odds we pay for bottled water.

[US] [Shifting preferences herald new era for soda sector](#)

June 24, 2008, The Atlanta Journal Constitution - The next few years mark a critical time for the U.S. beverage industry, executives and experts said Monday at the Beverage Digest Wall Street Smarts conference. Sales of carbonated soft drinks are sliding. A movement is building against bottled water, slowing its growth.

[US] [US mayors vote to phase out bottled water consumption](#)

June 23, 2008, Associated Press - The nation's mayors voted Monday against spending taxpayer money to buy bottled water, a blow to the beverage industry that has enjoyed growing profit from water sales in recent years.

[Canada] [Backlash against bottled water](#)

June 23, 2008, Calgary Herald - Schools turn back clock to using hallway fountains

[Canada] [School boards to consider banning plastic water bottles](#)

June 23, 2008, National Post - Bottled water could be removed from hundreds of school vending machines as early as next year as school boards raise concerns about the environmental impact of all those billions of disposable flasks that are not recycled.

[Canada] [School board takes aim at bottled water](#)

June 22, 2008, Vancouver Sun - Environmental impact and health cited as reasons for potential ban

[US] [Sour economy pushes healthy movement toward tap water](#)

June 22, 2008, South Florida Sun-Sentinel - The environmentalists have one reason to celebrate today's souring economy: With household expenses ballooning, more consumers are dumping bottled water in favor of a much cheaper, even more convenient alternative - the tap.

[Australia] [Deposit rise to hit drink prices](#)

June 22, 2008, Sunday Mail - Bottled and canned beer, soft drinks, flavoured milk, iced coffee, fruit juices, sports drinks, iced tea and bottled water will cost more from September 1 when container deposits will double to 10c.

[US] [Orlando Bans Bottled Water For City Employees](#)

June 21, 2008, Central Florida News 13 - The city is leading a nationwide effort to ban bottled water.

[UK] [Tax payers' money poured down drain](#)

June 20, 2008, Kent & Sussex Courier - Thirsty council workers are glugging their way through more than £100,000 of bottled water a year in Kent.

[US] [Critics gear up for vote on Poland Spring \(Nestlé\) deal](#)

June 20, 2008, Portland Press Herald - A Kennebunk couple plans a protest when the local district votes on the water sale next week.

[US] [Anti-bottled water campaign enlists mayors to cause](#)

June 20, 2008, The Miami Herald - An aisle at the Publix on Seventh Street in downtown Miami gleams with shelf upon shelf of bottled water that boasts of originating from the French Alps to Fiji. But those

bottles of water are increasingly coming under attack from environmental activists, who maintain tap water is better and bottled water is economically unsound and environmentally harmful, a position the bottling industry disputes.

[US] [Deposits on bottled water?](#)

June 18, 2008, Detroit Free Press - The Michigan United Conservation Clubs threw its considerable political weight Tuesday behind a plan to extend Michigan's first-in-the-nation bottle deposit law to containers for water, juice and tea bottles.

[US] [Feeling thrifty, the thirsty reach for tap water](#)

June 18, 2008, Associated Press - Tap water is making a comeback. With a day's worth of bottled water the recommended 64 ounces costing hundreds to thousands of dollars a year depending on the brand, more people are opting to slurp water that comes straight from the sink.

[US] [Tapping in to big savings by switching from bottled water](#)

June 18, 2008, New York Daily News - Gasoline isn't the only liquid draining New Yorkers' budgets - water can cost plenty for those who insist on drinking the bottled variety.

[New York City] [City Council Shuns Bottles In Favor of Water From Tap](#)

June 17, 2008, The New York Times - The City Council has become the latest government agency to take a stand against bottled water. Last week, the speaker's office announced that it would stop buying bottled water for the Council's downtown offices, which went through at least 6,000 single-serving bottles last year. As a result, bottled water will no longer be available at City Council events or official functions.

[Switzerland] [Documentary claims Nestlé spied on anti-globalisation group](#)

June 13, 2008, Agence France Presse - A documentary aired by francophone Swiss television station TSR has accused global food giant Nestle of having sent a spy to infiltrate an anti-globalisation group for one year.

[Canada] [Kitchener moves to ban water sales in public buildings](#)

June 11, 2008, Waterloo Region Record - The city is moving to ban the sale of bottled water in many public buildings. When city staff proposed the ban this week, it was met with some skepticism from council. Ultimately, councillors approved a ban in principle but they want more details before anything is implemented.

[US] [Eateries pull plug on bottled water](#)

June 10, 2008, The Grand Rapids Press - Three Ann Arbor restaurants have signed on to a national program aimed ultimately at stopping the use of bottled water.

[UK] [Free water on tap at all tube and rail stations](#)

June 10, 2008, The Evening Standard - Tap water vending machines could be installed in Tube and rail stations across London. They would allow commuters to refill their water bottles, either for free or for a small charge, under plans announced by Thames Water today.

[Australia] [Want to go green? Ditch bottled water](#)

June 10, 2008, The Age - The latest essential accessory is another environmental scourge. Did someone say fuel crisis? A naturally occurring substance until recently seen as a basic human right has been recalibrated as a luxury item. Ordinary people in slave to the good oil are forking out fistfuls of cash for their fix, while wilfully or guiltily ignoring the spectre of environmental catastrophe.

[India] [Tata Tea plans water brand to take on peers](#)

June 5, 2008, Business Standard - Tata Tea, which sold its stake in US-based Glaceau in last year, plans to begin selling a low-priced bottled water in the country through its unit Mount Everest Mineral Water (MEMW) to take on global rivals such as Coca-Cola and PepsiCo in the Rs 1,500-crore packaged drinking water market.

[Canada] [Activist has a thirst for giving bottled water the boot](#)

June 4, 2008, Edmonton Journal - In the beginning, there was Perrier and Vittel. They were the classic -- and classy -- glass-bottled water from France, served icy cold, their pleasant, slightly lemony, slightly carbonated taste guaranteed to quench the thirst and delight the palate. If things had stayed the same, these, and a few other, potables of the privileged would not even have appeared on environmental champion Geoff Green's radar. But things changed.

[Italy] [Venice urges tourists to drink from water fountains](#)

June 4, 2008, The Guardian - There is one thing Venice will never be short of and that is water. Now officials want thirsty tourists to give up swigging from their bottles of mineral water and to take advantage of the city's numerous drinking fountains.

[US] [Water Proof](#)

June 1, 2008, The New York Times - If you've come across any of the many media accounts of a consumer uprising against bottled water, you might well assume that makers and sellers of the stuff are on their knees.

[US] [Water firm to close plant in Hamburg](#)

May 31, 2008, Reading Eagle (Pennsylvania) - Assets of Wissahickon Spring Water Inc., Hamburg, have been sold to Nestle Waters North America and Wissahickon has notified the state Department of Labor and Industry that it is closing the plant.

[Canada] [Board to study water bottle ban](#)

May 28, 2008, Ottawa Citizen - The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board moved one step closer to banning the sale of water bottles in its 150 schools last night. The trustees voted to study the feasibility of the ban at last night's board meeting.

[UK] [Brands seek functional water lift](#)

May 28, 2008, Marketing - As environmental worries hit bottled-water sales, brands are turning to functional variants to win back consumers. Soft-drinks companies are increasing their investment in functional water brands as they strive to breathe life into the bottled water market.

[UK] [Coke's water man gushes forth](#)

May 25, 2008, The Sunday Times - American entrepreneur J Darius Bikoff sold his Vitaminwater branded business to Coca-Cola last year for £2 billion. Now he is launching it in Britain. Why isn't he on a beach?

[UK] [Taxpayers benefit from ban on bottled water](#)

May 22, 2008, Bath Chronicle - It's not often that politicians and council officials are encouraged to lose their bottle. But councillors at the Guildhall hope there'll be few complaints about a new environmental policy at meetings.