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Environmental Moments

Consumer Swaps

Water Bottles vs. Reusable Bottles

When it comes to our water bottle use, the facts are startling: "People in the U.S. open 1,000 bottles of water every second and put 60 million plastic water bottles in the trash each year." (Healthy) What happens to all this plastic waste? The bottles go on to pollute oceans and waterways, clog landfills already bursting with waste, and leach toxins into environments. Adopting a new habit of carrying a reusable water bottle can save you time and money and the environment from further taxing.

Is Bottled Water Safer?

A prevailing myth that contributed to the meteoric rise in the popularity of water bottles was that it was far safer and less contaminated than tap water. This is simply not the case. In most instances, bottled water comes from the same source as tap water and receives a last and largely unnecessary filtration on top of what it already receives from the plant and/or additives for taste. (World) Tap water has strict treatment standards and there are only a few extreme instances when it should be avoided. When you pick up a bottle from the store, you are paying for the plastic packaging and not the quality of the water contained.

The Impact of Bottled Water:

- 80% of bottled water ends up in landfills (Healthy)
- It can take up to 1,000 years for a single bottle to decompose and they leak harmful chemicals into the environment in the process (Healthy)
- Bottled water is about 3,000 percent more expensive per gallon than tap water (Harvard)

What You Can Do:

- If you don't like the taste of tap water or are worried about safety, filter your water at home
- Purchase and keep a stainless steel water bottle on you and fill it up regularly
- If you do use a water bottle, recycle it after it is empty

Drinking enough water is one of the healthiest habits you can adopt. It is equally important to take care to be a steward of the environment in doing so.

Works Cited

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