

Mayor and City Council

Ottawa City Hall

110 Laurier Ave. West

Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1

Dear Mayor Watson and Council,

April 1, 2019

In the past the CBA has written to Ottawa City Council about the bottled water issue. Here below is a reply from the Ottawa Water Study/Action Group (OWSAG).

The CBWA, now called the CBA, is a lobby group paid to promote bottled water despite clear problems tied to its use.

The fact that drinking water is a small part of all water use has no relevance to this issue. This would be true for all types of drinking water consumption. Drinking water is a small part of total water use, but it is a very important part. The real point is that well regulated municipal tap water, in reusable bottles with water fountains is a much better choice than single-use plastic bottles of water.

Municipal tap water in Canadian cities is of excellent quality and is highly regulated. Tap water is more highly regulated than bottled water. Ottawa city water is tested 300 times a day and is regularly rated as excellent.

Bottled water quality can be defective, as shown by recent tests and reports (McGill University tests (2018) and recent Canadian Food Inspection Association (CFIA) reports by the CBC, March, 2019). Water that sits in plastic bottles for long periods (especially in warm situations) has the potential to leach harmful substances from the plastic into the water. Water in a pipe system is regularly flowing, has been recently treated and is fresh.

The price of municipal tap water is 0.25 cents/litre. This is much lower than that of bottled water which can reach prices as high as \$4.00/litre.

CBWA/CBA claims that 70% of plastic bottles are recycled. However independent research organizations have shown that actual recycling rates are much lower (Polaris Institute in Canada reports that 23% of bottles are recycled and Ecowatch reports that 15% are recycled).

We now have evidence that discarded plastic bottles are creating an enormous environmental problem. Huge islands of plastic are growing in the oceans. Fish, whales and birds are ingesting these plastics. If we do not change course, by the year 2050

there will be more plastics in the ocean by weight than fish (World Economic Forum, 2016).

There is a clear solution to this growing environmental plastic problem. **Do not produce and use single-use plastic bottles in the first place!**

In summary, the use of single-use plastic containers is dangerous to our health and to the planet's health. Highly regulated municipal tap water can change the present trend of excessive plastification. Ottawa city council can help, by promoting their own excellent water.

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