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Dear Ms. Shaw and Mr. Artavia:

I am writing in regard to *Yahoo Lifestyle's* article "[The One Reason Bottled Water Is More Dangerous Than Tap Water,](#)" which Yahoo.com published on June 28, 2021. John Quinn's story makes numerous false and misleading statements, cites decades-old information, and does not contain the bottled water industry's perspective. The International Bottled Water Association (IBWA) requests that the article be either removed or updated so that *Yahoo Lifestyle* readers are not misinformed about bottled water quality, safety, and regulation.

Your writer, Mr. Quinn, cites a 2010 CBS News story quoting Peter Gleick as his main source (<https://www.cbsnews.com/pictures/bottled-water-10-shockers-they-dont-want-you-to-know/>). That information from 11 years ago is outdated, no longer relevant, and has previously been thoroughly rebutted by IBWA as containing false and misleading information. Had Mr. Quinn or *Yahoo Lifestyle* reached out to IBWA for comment, we could have ensured that you did not misinform your readers. Below are corrections to incorrect statements in Mr. Quinn's article.

Specifically

**Yahoo Lifestyle says:** Bottled water is tested less frequently than tap water.

**IBWA fact:** On a gallon per gallon basis, bottled water is required to be tested 30 times more often than tap water. By federal law, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations governing the safety and quality of bottled water must be as protective of public health as the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards for tap water. And, in some cases, such as lead, the bottled water regulations are more stringent. To suggest in any way that bottled water is less stringently regulated than tap water is simply not true.

**Yahoo Lifestyle says:** The FDA doesn't monitor bottled water for certain contaminants.

**IBWA fact:** FDA has established bottled water Standards of Quality for more than 90 substances (21 C.F.R. § 165.110 (b)). Most FDA bottled water quality standards are the

same as EPA's maximum contaminant levels (MCL) for tap water systems. The few differences are usually the results of the substance (usually tap water disinfectants) not being found in bottled water or the substance is regulated under another provision of law, such as FDA's food additives program.

**Yahoo Lifestyle says:** Bottled water doesn't get treated with fluoride.

**IBWA says:** Numerous bottled water brands sell water with added fluoride. See a complete list here: <https://bottledwater.org/list-of-brands-containing-fluoride/>

Fluoride is present in many foods and beverages, and almost all toothpaste contains fluoride. Too much exposure to fluoride can lead to a condition called fluorosis, which results in stains to the teeth. Too little fluoride can cause an increase in dental caries, particularly in children. Consumers (and parents for their children) should therefore look at how much fluoride they are receiving as part of their overall diet and should contact a healthcare or dental-care provider for their recommendation. Not all consumers want fluoride in their bottled water, but for those who do, as we mentioned above, multiple IBWA member companies produce bottled water with added fluoride.

**Yahoo Lifestyle says:** Bottled water is essentially the same water as you get from your kitchen faucet, just not as strictly regulated.

**IBWA says:** Bottled water made using municipal water is not just tap water in a bottle. Once the municipal source water enters the bottled water plant several processes are employed to ensure that it meets the purified or sterile standard of the U.S. Pharmacopeia 23rd Revision. These treatments can include ozonation, reverse osmosis, distillation, or de-ionization. The finished water product is then placed in a bottle under sanitary conditions and sold to the consumer. As mentioned above, regulations for bottled water, by federal law, must be at least as protective of public health as EPA's standards for tap water.

**Yahoo Lifestyle says:** Drinking water from a plastic bottle itself also comes with its own risks. Especially in the summer, plastic bottles exposed to heat for prolonged periods of time may cause the [water inside to become contaminated](#). A 2014 study found antimony and bisphenol A (BPA), both presumed to be carcinogens, [leached into water](#) after being exposed to a temperature of 158 degrees Fahrenheit. (Photo adjacent to this statement shows a person drinking from a 16.9-ounce PET plastic water bottle.)

**IBWA says:** PET plastic containers do not contain ingredients capable of producing dangerous substances under conditions of normal use, including being subjected to hot cars. PET plastic has been approved as safe for food and beverage contact by FDA and similar regulatory agencies throughout the world for more than 30 years. PET plastic is used in the containers for many other beverages, including soft drinks, juices, beer, wine and spirits. Conclusion: no links to cancer or other illnesses.

From the PET resin association: *"In an effort to ease unwarranted consumer fears, the PET Resin Association has reiterated that food and beverage containers made from the polyester plastic known as PET do not contain Bisphenol-A (BPA). BPA is a compound used to make polycarbonate, a different type of plastic that is used in some baby bottles, the lining of metal cans, and reusable sports bottles."*

([http://www.petresin.org/news\\_NoBPainPET.asp](http://www.petresin.org/news_NoBPainPET.asp)) In addition, the consensus among regulatory agencies around the world is that the current levels of exposure to BPA through food packaging are safe. As noted by Health Canada, an adult would have to drink approximately 1,000 liters (or 264 gallons) of water from polycarbonate water cooler bottles every day to approach the science-based safe intake limit for BPA established in Canada.

In 2020, for the fifth year in a row, bottled water outsold carbonated soft drinks (by volume) and retained its title as America's favorite packaged beverage. Americans are making great efforts to live a better lifestyle by choosing healthier foods and beverages, and drinking water—tap, bottled, or filtered—should be encouraged. With the high rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease in our on-the-go society, bottled water provides a safe, healthy, convenient beverage choice. Discouraging people from choosing this healthy drink option—while also discouraging them from recycling—is not in the public interest.

We kindly request that you either remove or update your online story to reflect these facts so that your readers are not misinformed about the safety of bottled water.

Sincerely,

Jill Culora  
Vice President Communications  
International Bottled Water Association