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April 19, 2023

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insider.com – Corrections

Dear Editors:

# I am writing on behalf of the International Bottled Water Association (IBWA) regarding the terribly misleading and error-ridden article, “Does bottled water go bad? When it’s safe to drink expired water and what to do with a contaminated bottle” by insider@insider.com (Emily Swaim), that you published online on MSN.com on March 23, 2023 (<https://www.msn.com/en-us/health/wellness/does-bottled-water-go-bad-when-its-safe-to-drink-expired-water-and-what-to-do-with-a-contaminated-bottle/ar-AA18ZtXH?li=BBnbfcL> ).

# This piece contains many false claims about bottled water, and its content seems to be presented in an intentionally deceptive manner. We see from the article that the writer (Ms. Swaim) did visit our website, but she obviously cherry-picked her facts so that it didn’t interfere with her scare-mongering narrative. As a result, MSN.com and insider.com are misleading its readers about this safe, healthy, and convenient consumer product.

We request that you update your article to include the following important bottled water facts about storage and the safety of bottled water:

* The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which regulates bottled water as a packaged food product, has determined that there is no limit to the shelf life of bottled water. Thus, FDA does not require an expiration date for bottled water products.
* Because it is packaged under sanitary, good manufacturing practices; is in a sanitary sealed container; and does not contain substances (such as sugars and proteins) typically associated with food spoilage, bottled water can be stored for extended periods of time without concerns.
* Only one state – New Jersey – has ever required expiration dating for bottled water. However, the New Jersey state legislature repealed the 2-year expiration date law several years ago, noting that there was no scientific evidence to support such a requirement. Some companies still place date-based lot codes on bottled water containers, which distribution and retail points typically use to assist in managing stock rotation.
* Bottled water and other beverages are packaged in sanitary and highly protective, sealed plastic containers that maintain the quality and freshness of the product. However, plastic containers – whether used for bottled water or other beverages – are slightly permeable, which may allow ambient air gases (such as vapors from household solvents, petroleum-based fuels, and other chemicals) to affect the taste and odor of your beverage. Your bottled water company takes great care to store and transport its products carefully so you can enjoy the fresh, clean taste you expect from bottled water. Proper storage will help ensure product quality.
* When water (bottled water or tap water) is exposed to extended periods of direct sunlight or heat sources, algae or mold may infrequently develop. Although this is not a general concern for public health, the bottled water industry wants you to enjoy the freshest, cleanest water possible, and storing water in a cool place out of direct sunlight helps to ensure that.
* PET plastic containers do not contain ingredients capable of producing dangerous substances under conditions of normal use, including being subjected to heat. PET plastic has been approved as safe for food and beverage contact by the FDA and similar regulatory agencies throughout the world for more than 35 years. PET plastic is the packaging material of choice for many other beverages — including soft drinks, juices, beer, wine, and spirits—and other food products—including peanut butter, salad dressings, condiment containers, vitamins, and vegetable oil—because of its transparency, stability, high-pressure resistance, barrier properties, flexibility, and light weight. PET’s versatility is but one reason why thousands of other food products, in addition to bottled water, are packaged in PET plastic.
* PET Plastic bottles do not contain phthalates. Both the PET Resin Association (PETRA) and the National Association for PET Container Resources (NAPCOR) state that phthalates are not in PET bottles.

**PETRA**: [https://petresin.org/the-science-behind-pet/](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fpetresin.org%2Fthe-science-behind-pet%2F&data=05%7C01%7CJCulora%40bottledwater.org%7Cb443c5bb914b48b5b46808db3603c309%7C697f24a6312748e7aa230b7a765626b7%7C0%7C0%7C638163162014182526%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=XKrdm0iGQyoxr1NvNNxqFZUKfjT8gB2y5FAdNu5cyLw%3D&reserved=0)

***“PET contains no phthalates.****Phthalates (i.e., phthalate ester plasticizers or orthophthalates) are not used in PET, nor is PET a phthalate. Plasticizer phthalates are sometimes used to soften other types of plastic, and are believed by some to be potential endocrine disruptors although this is unproven. The confusion seems to come from PET’s chemical name, polyethylene terephthalate. Despite the suffix, PET is not a plasticizer phthalate. Phthalates are low molecular weight monoesters made from ortho-phthalic acid. PET is a high molecular weight polyester made from tere-phthalic acid. They are completely different chemicals.”*

**NAPCOR:**[https://napcor.com/frequently-asked-questions/](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fnapcor.com%2Ffrequently-asked-questions%2F&data=05%7C01%7CJCulora%40bottledwater.org%7Cb443c5bb914b48b5b46808db3603c309%7C697f24a6312748e7aa230b7a765626b7%7C0%7C0%7C638163162014182526%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=gXnBWp1lIi%2FrlA5sVpnimzLpx%2B1vqSlObiTTQycgPAM%3D&reserved=0)

*“PET does not contain plasticizers. Orthophthalates are never substituted for the terephthalates used in the manufacture of PET, nor are the two different chemicals ever mixed to make PET. Further, orthophthalates are NOT part of the PET recycling process.”*

Bottled water is America’s favorite packaged drink. With the high rates of obesity, diabetes, and heart disease in the United States, discouraging people from choosing bottled water, the healthiest drink option, is not in the public interest.

We request that you update your online story to reflect the facts we’ve provided so that your readers are not misinformed about bottled water’s health and environmental impacts.

Sincerely,

Jill Culora
Vice President Communications
International Bottled Water Association

This letter was sent via email to:

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rrt@we-worldwide.com

corrections@insider.com