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March 13, 2017

Quentin Fottrell,
Columnist / News Editor – MarketWatch
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201 California Street, 10th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94111

Dear Mr. Fottrell,

I am writing to draw your attention to incorrect information in your article "[Bottled water overtakes soda as America's No. 1 drink — why you should avoid both,](#)" published March 12, 2017, on MarketWatch.com.

The statement "*When they buy bottled water, they are often times drinking the same water that comes out of the tap*" is simply not true. When a public water system is used as a source for making purified bottled water, several processes are employed to ensure that it meets comprehensive U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations. These treatments can include ozonation, filtration, reverse osmosis, distillation, or de-ionization. The finished water product is then placed in a bottle under sanitary conditions and sold to the consumer, and the physical quality of this water is not "the same water that comes out of the tap," as stated in your article. Both Mr. Peter Gleick and Ms. Mae Wu imply the water in these bottled water products is the same as tap water, but they are incorrect. To read what the FDA's federal regulations have to say on the topic, visit

<https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cdrh/cfdocs/cfcfr/CFRSearch.cfm?fr=165.110>

It should also be noted that federal law requires that FDA bottled water regulations be as protective of the public health as Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards for public water systems. And, in some case, such as lead, the FDA bottled water regulations are more stringent than the EPA tap water standards.

Please remove the statement quoted above from your article, as running incorrect information benefits no one.

Additionally, we take issue with your statements about recycling. Bottled water containers are 100-percent recyclable. The most recent recycling rate for bottled water containers is 35.4 percent, and, of all the drink packaging that is mismanaged (i.e., recyclables that end up in landfills), bottled water containers make up just 3.3 percent. (Glass containers make up 66.7 percent; soda containers make up 13.3 percent; and aluminum cans make up 7.9 percent). See this [drink packaging in U.S. landfills infographic](#).

PET plastic bottled water bottles already use less plastic than any other packaged beverage. According to the Beverage Marketing Corporation (BMC), between 2000 and

2014, the average weight of a 16.9-ounce (half-liter) PET plastic bottled water container declined 51 percent. This resulted in a savings of 6.2 billion pounds of PET resin since 2000. And the results of a 2015 IBWA water and energy use benchmarking study show that the amount of water and energy used to produce bottled water products is less than all other types of packaged beverages. On average, only 1.32 liters of water and 0.24 mega joules of energy are used to produce every one liter of finished bottled water, including the liter of water consumed.

As Americans are making great efforts to choose healthier foods and beverages, it is not in the best interest of your readers to discourage consumption of this safe, healthy, and water-efficient product.

Thank you for reading and giving my concerns your attention. I respectfully request that you correct your online story because its inaccuracies are misleading the public. I am happy to speak with you directly should you wish to discuss any of these points or would like me to answer other questions you may have.

Sincerely,

Jill Culora
Vice President of Communications
International Bottled Water Association

CC: Jeremy Olshan, Editor – MarketWatch, Jeremy.olshan@dowjones.com