

**DO SOMETHING!**

# the manly council water fountain project

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How councils can  
reinvent the water fountain

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Another Do Something initiative  
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# the manly council water fountain project

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Research commissioned by Do Something has shown that 85% of Australians do not trust the water that comes out of old-fashioned water bubblers.

Concern over water quality and a reduction in bubbler numbers has led to a significant increase in Australia's usage of bottled water.

As part of our campaign to reduce the purchasing of bottled water, Do Something has partnered with Manly Council to introduce a new type of water fountain on Manly Corso and Manly Beach.

These filtered water stations are designed to bring a fresh approach to council-owned water fountains.

Since August 2008, 6 of them have been installed. These have proven to be so successful that Manly Council is now adding at least 14 more.

When it comes to reducing bottled water use, Manly Council's filtered water fountains significantly outperform traditional bubblers.

**This is the reason why Do Something is backing the Manly Council approach. We're hoping that other councils will adapt Manly's role model for use in their own communities.**

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85% of Australians  
do not trust the  
water that comes  
out of old-fashioned  
water bubblers



# the manly council water fountain project

## the results

- Manly Council estimates that the 6 water fountains have so far prevented the purchase of 150,000 litres of bottled water. This has potentially removed a quarter of a million plastic water bottles from the waste stream.
- Garbage collection volumes in the area where the bubblers are installed have decreased 30-40% (an estimated 50% of this is plastic bottles). To reduce this further, Manly Council now plans to install 14 more water fountains in high-use areas.
- During summer, people have been lining up to refill their reusable bottles and to drink from the fountains. Usage has been across all demographics including mums filling bottles for infants.
- The national media coverage about the Manly initiative has created a new wave of interest in public water fountains and the need to increase their availability. The '60 Minutes' story on bottled water and the Manly fountain project can be seen at:  
[www.bottledwateralliance.com.au/60mins](http://www.bottledwateralliance.com.au/60mins)

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The '60 Minutes' story about Manly's water fountains has generated significant interest



# the manly council water fountain project

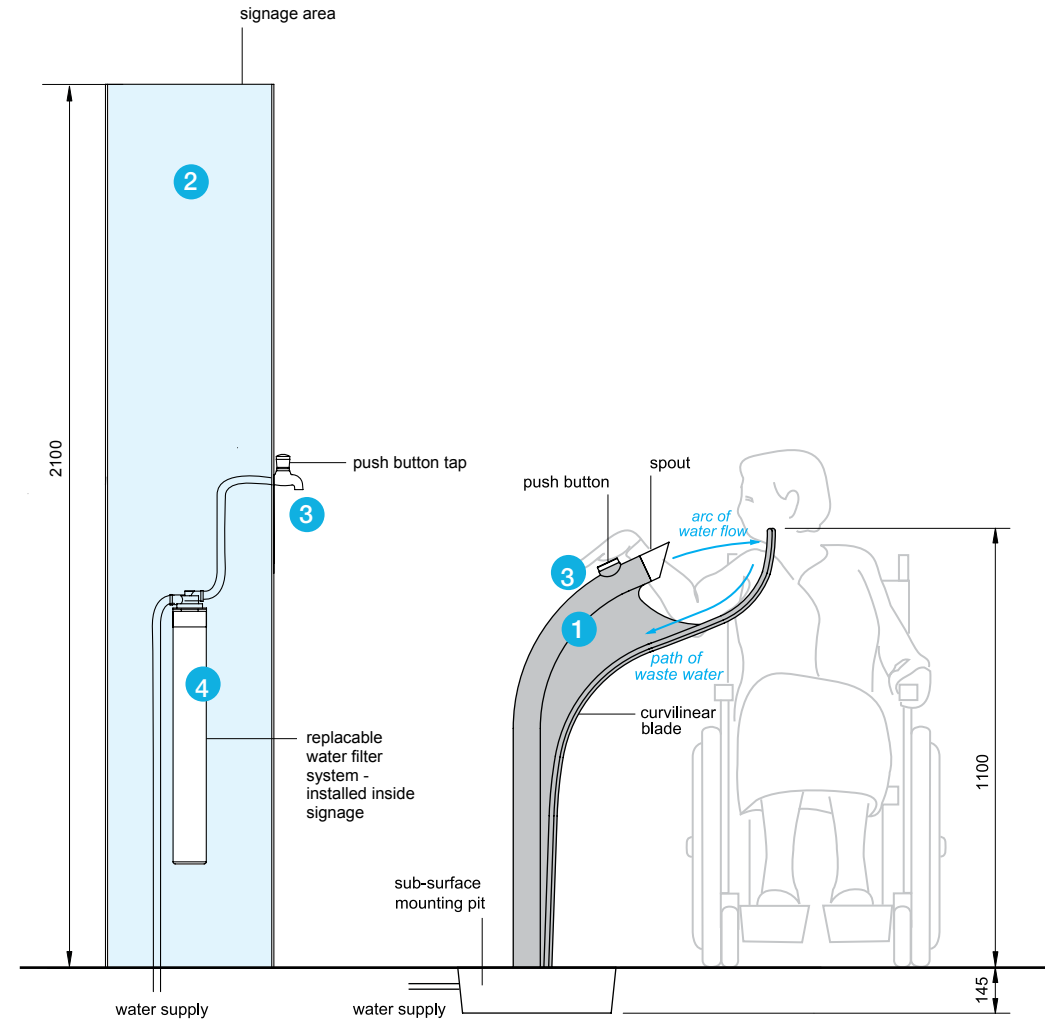


# the manly council water fountain project

## the design\*

## the four key elements

- 1 A designer water fountain. These are more vandal-resistant, wheelchair friendly and hygienic than old-fashioned bubblers.
- 2 Prominent signage that makes it easy for people to spot and use the water fountain.
- 3 Taps on the signage that allow people to refill water bottles with free filtered water. This water is as good as if not better than the bottled water that people buy in local shops.
- 4 The sign also contains an easy to replace filter that removes chlorine from the water. As will be explained, removing chlorine has been a key reason behind the success of the new water fountains.



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\*Water Filter system and signage by Culligan Water. Drinking Fountain by Street Furniture Australia (Fountain Head).

# the manly council water fountain project

## the research

Do Something recently commissioned a research study into water bubblers. This national survey of 1,000 Australians highlighted a number of key issues.

**Nine out of ten Australians questioned had no idea where their local community water bubblers were located.** This is the reason for Manly's high profile water fountain signage.

**Eight out of ten people wanted more water fountains in community locations.**

This is the reason why Manly has put its fountains in high visitation pedestrian locations.

Despite the high quality of Australia's tap water, **85 per cent of people were concerned about the quality of the drinking water coming out of council water bubblers.**

A key reason for this concern is that warm bubbler water can have a chlorine smell – especially on hot days. This can significantly affect people's taste perception of the water. This is why old-fashioned bubblers so often fail the taste test with the general public. By putting in a water filter, Manly Council has ensured that the water coming out of their fountains has no chlorine smell - even on extremely hot days.

**Two-thirds of people said they would drink less bottled water if there were better water fountains in their communities.**

Old-fashioned bubblers are often used as litter receptacles for chewing gum, cigarette butts and other litter. The bowl and the dispenser can also become clogged with twigs and dirt.

**The design of the Manly water fountain overcomes the negative issues associated with the old bubblers. This is one of the reasons why Manly Council uses water fountains instead of the old-style water bubblers. Secondly, the public likes the idea of free filtered water - the filter eliminates concerns about the fountain's water quality.**

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## Fountain Head

- ✓ Filtered
- ✓ Hygienic
- ✓ Accessible
- ✓ Vandal resistant
- ✓ Eco-friendly

# the manly council water fountain project

## the logic behind the project

Climate change and litter were two of the key reasons why Manly Council launched its new water fountains. As has been well documented, the production, transportation, refrigeration and disposal of bottled water contributes significantly to climate change.

The majority of single use water bottles also end up as litter or landfill, as opposed to being reused or recycled. When they end up as litter, this not only detracts from the natural beauty of the environment, it also contributes to the council's cost of picking up litter.

The aim of the new water fountains was to reduce both of these problems by providing people with free filtered water. By providing this type of water, usage of the water fountains would increase, thus doing away with the need for people to purchase bottled water.

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Photo: Alfonso Para



Climate change  
& litter are the two  
key reasons why  
Manly Council  
launched their new  
water fountains

The decision making behind the project:

## manly council's resolutions

**OCTOBER 2007** - Manly Council put a motion to the Local Government Association Annual Conference that the Association should mount a campaign to address the increasing consumption of bottled water. It was overwhelmingly supported by councils.

**DECEMBER 2007** - Manly Council resolved to cease purchasing bottled water and to install additional public bubblers.

### the resolution

(a) That Manly Council, in line with the recent policy decisions by City of San Francisco and the New South Wales Department of Environment & Climate Change ceases to purchase single serve bottles of water within our organisation on environmental grounds.  
(b) That Manly Council implements a program of installing more bubblers for public usage to encourage the drinking of tap water.

**21 APRIL 2008** - Manly Council resolved to work with the Bottled Water Alliance

*Resolved that Council work with the Bottled Water Alliance on the viability of a project to encourage use of tap water on The Corso and discourage the use of plastic bottled water, and report back to Council.*

**4 AUGUST 2008** - Manly Council resolved to partner with Culligan Water to install filtered water bubblers

*Resolved that Manly Council accept Culligan Water's proposal to supply filtration systems for six bubblers on The Corso. Details of the proposal are as follows [the resolution went on to spell out specific details of the agreement between the Council and Culligan]. Manly Council selects SFA - Fountain Head as the most appropriate fountain for this purpose.*

**9 FEBRUARY 2009** - Manly Council resolved to install more filtered water stations

*Resolved that, building on Council's resolution of 10 December 2007 that Manly council implement a program of installing more water stations for public usage to encourage the drinking of tap water, and in light of the great success of the filtered water stations in The Corso, Council install more water stations at all high visitation locations.*

# the associated measures

## Further Implementation of the project

In addition to working with the Bottled Water Alliance on the water fountain project, Manly Council decided to:

- give away reusable bottles at Council events and workshops and also to local community organisations, school groups and sports clubs
- carry out a pro-active environmental education campaign to encourage the local community and visitors to use water fountains and reusable bottles
- using means such as signage, media releases, Mayoral Messages, community newsletters and posters, encourage local retailers to support the campaign by promoting the environmental and public relation benefits to the community. It also encouraged local retailers to sell their own refillable bottles.

# the community grant offer

Culligan Water has a Community Grants program that can give your council, school or community facility FREE water filter equipment for every water fountain that you install or upgrade in your community. **In addition to this, Culligan Water is willing to provide replacement water filters at half price.**

Each filter provides 10,000 litres of filtered drinking water - this equates to an approximate cost of only \$60 per bubbler per quarter. **This half price offer covers the entire life of your water fountain.** All Culligan requires in return is a small logo on your water fountain signage (see Manly images for how this presents).

For information about this Community Grant, please e-mail:  
[info@bottledwateralliance.com](mailto:info@bottledwateralliance.com)



MANLY COUNCIL  
[www.manly.nsw.gov.au](http://www.manly.nsw.gov.au)



Water Fountain Suppliers  
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[www.streetfurniture.com](http://www.streetfurniture.com)



Filter & Sign Suppliers  
**CULLIGAN WATER**  
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## the public tender

Manly Council went to public tender for:

1. the water fountains
2. the water filters and the filter replacements
3. the signage. The purpose of the signage was fourfold:
  - a) it would promote the fountain's free filtered water
  - b) it would house the fountain's water filter equipment
  - c) it would have taps on it that the public could use to refill bottles
  - d) it provided an ideal opportunity for environmental education, particularly on the link between bottled water and climate change.

After this public tender process, Manly Council chose **Street Furniture Australia** for the water fountain and **Culligan Water** for the water filters and signs.

**For more information on the tender and the parties involved, please contact [info@bottledwateralliance.com](mailto:info@bottledwateralliance.com).**

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# the manly council water fountain project

## frequently asked questions



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Q:  
A:

### Public filtered drinking water stations are nice in theory, but do the benefits justify the costs?

Manly Council estimates that the 6 initial water fountains have so far prevented the purchase of 150,000 litres of bottled water. This has potentially removed 250,000 600ml plastic water bottles from the litter and landfill stream.

Public garbage collection volumes in the area where the bubblers are installed have decreased by 30-40% (an estimated 50% of this was comprised of plastic bottles). To reduce litter and garbage further, Manly Council now plans to install 14 more water fountains in high-use areas.

During summer, people lined up to refill multiple reusable bottles and to drink from the fountains. Usage has been across all demographics including young mums filling bottles for infants. It's a win-win, for the community, the environment and the council. The community benefits have significantly outweighed the minimal costs of the project. Indeed, the filtered water equipment has been supplied free of charge by Culligan Water (this free filter equipment is available for all councils Australia-wide).

### Do Manly's filters remove fluoride?

To maximise public dental health, the filters do not remove fluoride from the water.

They are certified to remove all particles greater than 0.5 microns, as well as lead and chlorine. The filters never secretly fail and they will stop producing water when they are exhausted. This is important, as the quality of the filter's water is guaranteed from the first drop until the last.

### Don't filtered water drinking stations require a resource intensive maintenance and cleaning schedule?

Cleaning requirements are minimal and simple. For example, the bubblers on Manly Corso are disinfected twice a day by Council cleansing staff during their normal rounds. They use an environmentally-responsible spray disinfectant on the bubbler nozzle, which leaves no aftertaste.

The filter units themselves are hidden inside the signage next to the water fountain, so these are not exposed to outside elements. The bubblers are also designed so that litter such as twigs and cigarette butts cannot accumulate near the nozzle.

Q:  
A:

### How tall is the signage?

The height of the Manly Council signage is approximately 2.1 metres. This can be reduced to a height of 1.2 metres. Culligan Water can also arrange for the signs to be manufactured with your own artwork.

### Why are taps added to the signage?

The Manly water fountains are not the only source of water for the public. Spring loaded taps have also been added to Manly Council's water fountain signage. This makes it a lot easier for people to fill their own refillable bottles. This plays a significant role in reducing bottled water use.

### Don't the filters produce dirty water at the end of their life?

There is no risk of expired filters delivering dirty or contaminated water. The water simply stops flowing after the filters have filtered 10,000 litres of water. This is obvious to council workers as the flow rate decreases dramatically indicating that filter replacement is needed.

### Isn't filter replacement costly?

As part of Culligan Water's Community Grants offer, the filter units are supplied free of charge to councils, not-for-profit community organisations and educational institutions. Replacement filters will be supplied by Culligan at half price. This equates to a cost of about \$60 per bubbler per quarter. All Culligan Water requires in return for this sponsorship is a small Culligan logo on the water filter signage.

### Don't filters require frequent replacement?

No, the filters are long lasting. Typically in a high use public area the filters would require replacement every quarter. This has been the case for the Manly filters.

### Isn't the filter replacement process difficult and time consuming?

As Manly Council can verify, it couldn't be simpler. You simply screw out the filter panel, drop the new filter in, and screw it in. It is akin to replacing a lightbulb.

### Want more information?

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**Water Filter**  
Removes pollutants such as:

- ✗ Chlorine
- ✗ Lead
- ✗ Dirt and cloudiness
- ✗ Giardia lamblia cysts
- ✗ Cryptosporidium parvum cysts
- ✗ Entamoeba histolytica cysts
- ✗ Mould and algae
- ✗ Bad tastes and odours
- ✗ Asbestos fibres
- ✗ Oxidised iron
- ✗ Oxidised manganese
- ✗ Oxidised sulfides
- ✗ 99.9+% of all particles 0.5+ micron

Q:  
A:

**Q:** Why is the SFA 'Fountain Head' different to traditional bubblers?

**A:** 'Fountain Head' is a high-tech water fountain designed to provide drinking water with comfort and hygiene. It is an iconic design which creates a contemporary sculptural feature in any urban setting.

'Fountain Head' makes grime, litter collection and even drain blockage a thing of the past. Instead of a 'bowl', water flows down a 'blade' and neatly disperses into a ground-level sump, leaving no visible residue. Providing a clear arc of fresh water from a precision stainless steel spout, 'Fountain Head' also minimises user contact with the fountain surfaces.

'Fountain Head' successfully addresses the problems with the existing water bubbler such as poor hygiene, unreliability, vandalism and disabled access, and redefines the way we drink water in public environments. 'Fountain Head' is the result of three years of extensive prototyping and testing to ensure product quality and reliability.

**What makes 'Fountain Head' so vandal-resistant?**

'Fountain Head' is wholly constructed from solid, cast metal. It's robust and fluid form has no sharp edges or external breakable components.

**Is 'Fountain Head' accessible for wheelchair users?**

'Fountain Head' has a cantilever of 500mm to allow standard wheelchair access from the side, thus ensuring a drinking position that aligns with the middle of the water flow. A full accessibility report can be found at [www.streetfurniture.com](http://www.streetfurniture.com)

**What are the 'Fountain Head' colours?**

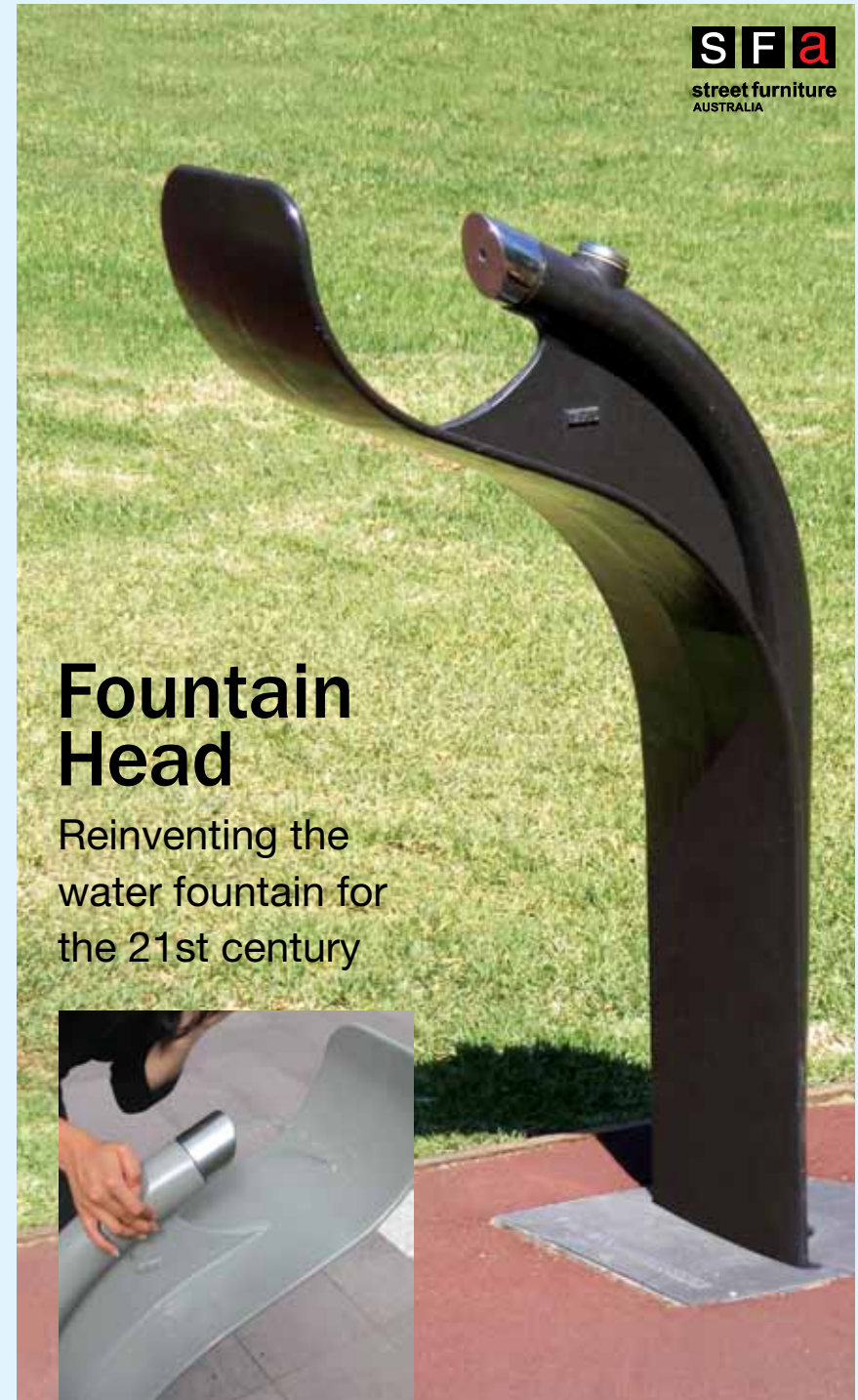
'Fountain Head' offers two standard Dulux powder coat finishes: Black and Precious Silver Pearl. Custom colours are available on enquiry.

**Where else has 'Fountain Head' been installed?**

Installations include: Manly Corso (NSW), Circular Quay (NSW), Sydney University (NSW), Darling Harbour (NSW), University of Adelaide (SA), Manor Lakes (VIC) and South East Transit Busway (QLD).

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**Q:**  
**A:**

# the bottled water alliance

## frequently asked questions



Q:  
A:



Pictured from left: Do Something founders Pat Cash, Jon Dee and Tina Jackson with Manly Mayor Jean Hay and Councillor Barbara Aird. *The Manly Daily*, 11 February 2009

### Who runs the Bottled Water Alliance?

The Bottled Water Alliance is run by Do Something, a new not-for-profit established by Planet Ark founders Jon Dee and Pat Cash, in association with Tina Jackson, the former Executive Director of the National Trust of Australia. Do Something has been set up to create and promote positive social and environmental change.

To find out more, visit [www.dosomething.net.au](http://www.dosomething.net.au)

### What are the aims of the Bottled Water Alliance?

The Bottled Water Alliance aims to work with councils, the public and the media to reduce the usage of single-use bottled water by 20% by 2011. In addition to helping the environment, this would also save Australians \$100 million every year. It would also reduce the amount of water used by 200 million litres p/a. The Bottled Water Alliance also works to promote the health and environmental benefits of tap water and filtered water.

### How can our council join the Bottled Water Alliance?

Joining the Bottled Water Alliance is simple. Your council just has to formally decide that you will try to reduce bottled water usage in your community. Once you have done this, you are eligible to join the Alliance. Just email us via [info@bottledwateralliance.com](mailto:info@bottledwateralliance.com)

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[bottledwateralliance.com.au](http://bottledwateralliance.com.au)

Q:

A: The Alliance aims to bring together councils and other not-for-profit organisations to promote the environmental, cost and health benefits of reducing bottled water use. Our web site gives Alliance members regular updates on the issue at [www.bottledwateralliance.com.au](http://www.bottledwateralliance.com.au)

Secondary actions that your council could undertake after you have joined the Alliance include the following:

- 1) You could formally decide to offer tap or filtered water at council functions, meetings and events. This could include banning bottled water. Many councils have already done this, both here and overseas.
- 2) You could upgrade or install new water fountains in your community.
- 3) You could promote the use of reusable bottles in your local community. This could be done in a similar way to how councils promoted reusable bags. Why not put your council logo on giveaway reusable water bottles?
- 4) You could resolve to cease purchasing bottled water for your local council premises. Instead you could switch to tap water or water filters.



## did you know?

### Why do we need to reduce the usage of bottled water?

Australians have some of the best tap water in the world. Despite this, Australians spend half a billion dollars a year on bottled water.

Bottled water damages the environment by consuming oil and other resources. The processing, refrigeration and transportation of bottled water also creates significant greenhouse gases. Every year, billions of discarded plastic water bottles around the world also end up as litter or landfill.

- Producing and delivering a litre of bottled water can emit hundreds of times more greenhouse gases than a litre of tap water. Bottled water has to be transported by truck. Tap water doesn't.
- In many cases, a litre of bottled water is more expensive than a litre of petrol.
- The Department of Environment and Climate Change estimates that 200ml of oil is used to produce, package, transport and refrigerate each litre bottle of bottled water. As a result, an estimated 50 million litres of oil is used every year in the manufacture and distribution of bottled water in Australia.
- PET plastic bottles are the main packaging containers used for bottled water. Australia recycles only 36% of PET plastic drink bottles. The rest are littered or landfilled.
- Australia's use of bottled water generates more than 60,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions p/a.
- We estimate that the Australian bottled water industry uses over a billion litres of water every year. U.S. figures indicate that many companies use up to 3 litres of water for each litre of product sold.
- Tap water contains added fluoride which is good for teeth. Bottled water doesn't. Some dentists are concerned that bottled water may be causing increased cavities in young women and teenagers.
- Reducing bottled water use can be as simple as getting your office or workplace to ban the purchasing of bottled water or bottled water coolers. Councils and companies can save money by doing this.

Q:

A:

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**Do Something!**

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