



#loveNWTwater COMMUNITY PLEDGE CHECKLIST

The how-to guide for making the switch to sustainable, health-conscious, bottle-free drinking water in your community!



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PURPOSE OF THIS CHECKLIST



This document is designed to help communities in the Northwest Territories make the transition to drinking bottle-free water. By switching to tap water you can ensure that your community has access to safe drinking water while minimizing waste, pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and resource depletion.



Listed in the following pages are the steps you can take to join the ever-growing movement to #loveNWTwater. The checklist is a general guideline and not every suggestion will be applicable to everyone! Try to follow all the steps that apply to your community or organization, and feel free to make adaptations on the ones that don't.



Visit www.loveNWTwater.ca for more resources, information, and Frequently Asked Questions. You can always get in touch with **Ecology North** for further support with your initiative.

ecologynorth.ca
(867) 873-6019

HOW TO JOIN THE

#loveNWTwater

MOVEMENT

1

TAKE THE PLEDGE

Go to www.loveNWTwater.ca and sign up your community!

Any person who is in a position to make a commitment on behalf of the community can sign up on the campaign website. Make sure you use the Organization Pledge instead of the Individual Pledge.

2

PASS A RESOLUTION AT A COUNCIL MEETING

On Page 11 of this booklet is a sample NWTAC policy for banning the sale of bottled water. Adapt the template to your community and pass the policy at a Council meeting.

3

CONNECT WITH ECOLOGY NORTH

The campaign manager will get in touch with you when you take the pledge. From there you'll receive a swag kit, and resources that will help promote the initiative. Ecology North will also give a shout-out to your community over social media and in their newsletter.

4

FOLLOW THE CHECKLIST

Look through the following pages for suggestions that are applicable to your community. The initiative will be successful if community leaders can provide alternatives to bottled water and

PROVIDE ALTERNATIVES TO BOTTLED WATER

IN REC CENTRES, SCHOOLS, AND TOWN HALL



- Install water fountains and bottle fill stations.
- Sell re-usable water bottles in the concession, at the reception desk, and in vending machines.
- Provide 5-gallon water jug dispensers in offices and public spaces. These jugs are filled with NWT water, and the jugs are made of a durable plastic that can be re-used many times.



- At town hall or band office, provide staff with re-usable water bottles.
- Make pitchers of water and glasses available in communal kitchens. The pitchers can be chilled in the fridge to reduce any chlorine taste.

AT MEETINGS, PERFORMANCES, AND EVENTS



- Specify to caterers that you do not wish to purchase bottled water.
- Make pitchers of water and re-usable glasses available.
- Promote access to tap water and sales of re-usable bottles in community facilities.



- Put up signage pointing to the location of water fountains.
- Develop a service that can loan re-usable cups, mugs, and pitchers for use at public events. If there is an organization in the community that might be able to provide this service, they can get in touch with Ecology North for direction and support.

RAISE AWARENESS IN THE COMMUNITY

PROMOTE YOUR INITIATIVE



- Contact Ecology North to receive posters, photos and swag that will help kick off your initiative.
- Distribute posters and infographics for display in public spaces and local businesses.
- Have a “bottled water retirement party” to launch your campaign.
- Raise awareness online by sharing **#loveNWTwater** on social media.



ENCOURAGE FURTHER LEARNING



- Organize a trip to the water treatment plant to educate people on the source of their drinking water and how it is treated.
- Contact Ecology North and request a drinking water education session at the school or for the community.
- In council chambers, let your community know that you are proud of the water, and of the workers who treat and manage it.
- Protect and steward the local source water to ensure that there will always be access to safe drinking water in your community.



EVERY EFFORT COUNTS!

No matter the size of the organization or community, every step in the right direction makes a difference. Eliminating bottled water, even on an individual scale, reduces waste, energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in our beautiful territory. Recognize the effort of everyone who participates and keep the conversation going!

WHY MAKE THE SWITCH TO BOTTLE-FREE?

IT'S LOCAL

Community governments invest in water treatment facilities and training operators so that every individual has safe drinking water in their home.

IT'S SUSTAINABLE

Keep plastic waste from littering our land. Minimize resource depletion and the use of fossil fuels in packaging and transportation.

IT'S CHEAP

Less than \$0.01 per litre. No transportation or packaging costs.

IT'S SAFE

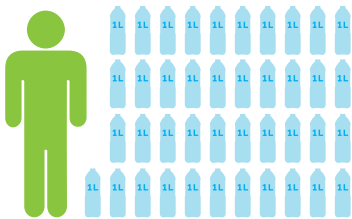
With tap water there are no harmful toxins from plastic packaging. Quality tests are strict and frequent.

SET A POSITIVE EXAMPLE

By leading the way in a sustainable initiative, you make it easier for other organizations and community members to do the same!

THE FACTS ABOUT BOTTLED WATER IN THE NWT

In 2014, we consumed more than **1.8 MILLION** litres of water from more than **1.3 MILLION** bottles

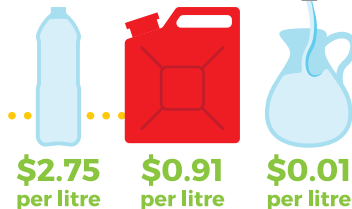


That's **41 litres** per person



Nearly **200,000** of these bottles became litter or land fill

Bottled water can be **3 times** more expensive than gasoline

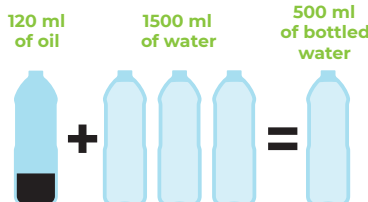


It costs **more than \$900** to drink a one-litre bottle of water every day for a year

Most bottled water is filtered tap water from southern cities

Bottled water takes up to **2,000 times** more energy to produce and transport than tap water

It takes **125 ml of oil** to make and transport a 500 ml bottle of water



It takes up to three litres of water to make one litre of bottled water

THE TAP WATER ALTERNATIVE

HEALTH AND SAFETY

A recent *Marketplace* study¹ by McGill researchers found microplastics in every brand of bottled water they tested: Aquafina, Dasani, Eska, Naya and Nestle Pure Life.

Drinking water in the NWT is treated to remove any harmful chemicals and microorganisms. The water is tested regularly, and results are monitored by local and regional Environmental Health Officers.

A LOCAL RESOURCE

There are 34 public water systems in the NWT, all of which get their water from different sources. 30 of the systems draw water from surface water (i.e. lakes or rivers), and 4 from groundwater (i.e. underground wells).

We are fortunate to have access to clean tap water in every NWT community. It is a resource we should protect and be proud of.

SAVINGS

The cost of tap water is 0.003% of the the cost of bottled water.

WASTE MANAGEMENT

In 2015 nearly 200,000 bottles ended up in our landfill, or as litter, where they never completely decompose. As the plastic breaks into microscopic pieces, it often washes into rivers, lakes and waterways.

Drinking tap water eliminates that waste. The resources used to transport and access tap water are tiny by comparison.

TASTE MANAGEMENT?

If residents aren't keen on the taste of their tap water – don't worry, there are solutions! A swampy taste or odour can be amended by cleaning the water tank. Water tanks should be cleaned and disinfected annually.

If tap water tastes too much like chlorine, it can simply be filtered. A very simple solution is to leave a large jug of water sitting out overnight, allowing the chlorine to leave the water before you drink it.

1. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/marketplace-canadian-bottled-water-microplastics-1.4606182>



More information is available online at loveNWTwater.ca

ONGOING NWT BOTTLE-FREE INITIATIVES



As of June 1, 2009, **THE NWT LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY** will not sell, purchase or distribute bottled water or pop, including at catered meetings and public functions



Also in 2009, **THE NWT ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITIES** passed a resolution which urges NWT municipalities to phase out the sale and purchase of bottled water at their own facilities, where potable water is available.



IN YELLOWKNIFE, Ecology North rents out water pitchers and reusable mugs to make tap water accessible at public events and meetings. This model can be replicated by other organizations in communities across the NWT.



SO FAR, WHO ELSE HAS TAKEN THE #loveNWTwater PLEDGE?

- 550+ individuals
- The City of Yellowknife
- Community of Gameti
- Town of Fort Smith
- Hamlet of Aklavik
- 4 GNWT departments
- 7 schools across the NWT

SAMPLE POLICY

Template by **NWT POWER UP! FOR HEALTH**

SECTION/NUMBER Healthy Eating — 08	APPROVAL DATE
SUBJECT Drop the water bottle — Drink tap water	AMENDMENT DATES
POLICY People like making healthy choices that are also environmentally friendly and save money. By banning the sale of bottled water in retail and vending machines operated by Community Government Name , the community is making an environmentally responsible choice while providing clean, safe drinking water out of the tap Community Government Name will ensure safe, clean drinking water is available and accessible through tap, fountain or water coolers at all community government buildings for community members, employees and visitors. Community Government Name will no longer provide bottled water in the retail outlets, vending machines, functions and fundraising events.	
DEFINITIONS N/A	
GUIDELINES <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Bottled water consumes a significant amount of non-renewable fossil fuels to extract, package and transport water creating unnecessary air quality and climate change impacts.2. It takes about three litres of water to manufacture a one litre plastic bottle of water. ...	

GUIDELINES (con't)

3. Bottled water companies use municipal water and groundwater sources when a growing percentage of Canadian municipalities have faced water shortages in recent years.
4. Although bottled water is distributed in a container that can be recycled, between 40% and 80% of empty bottles end up as litter and/or are placed directly into the garbage and take up unnecessary space in landfills.
5. Tap Water is safe, healthy, highly regulated and accessible to community members, employers, employees and visitors and more sustainable than bottled water.
6. Given the high cost of transportation in the NWT, **Community Government Name** should not be required to pay transportation costs to ship bottled water when it is readily available in the community.
7. The NWT has some of the most pristine source water in the world.
8. **Community Government Name** is proud of "our" safe and healthy water and "our" employees who are so dedicated and committed to delivering it to our residents.
9. **Community Government Name** will phase out the sale and purchase of bottle water at our own facilities where appropriate and where potable water is available.
10. **Community Government Name** will no longer provide bottle water at any meetings, community functions or fundraising events.
11. **Community Government Name** will make re-usable water bottles available for sale at Town Hall and the Recreation Complex.
12. **Community Government Name** will take advantage of awareness campaigns about the positive benefits and quality of municipal water supplies.

REFERENCES

<http://ecologynorth.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Behind-the-bottle-Water-Bottle-Info-Sheet-2009-publication.pdf>



[#loveNWTwater.ca](https://www.loveNWTwater.ca)

ECOLOGY NORTH



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another initiative by

