

Only You Can Ensure Your Drinking Water Is Safe



Part 1 of 5

What do you get when you fix jet fuel, radon, ammonia and pharmaceuticals with water? Simple. You get tap water that every water treatment plant in the United States can legally call “safe to drink.”

Water quality is one of the most important environmental concerns for Americans. The EPA, White House and Congress are disconnected from the reality of the situation and the wishes of many citizens. In the past decade, the government has actually been working against the interests of securing clean water.

[US Tap Water Is Tainted With Pharmaceuticals](#)

On March 10th, 2008, the Associated Press released the findings of a five month investigation of tap water conducted in 24 American cities. The investigation found trace quantities of drugs in the water used by 41 million people.

When officials were asked why the press had to be the ones to inform the public and not the people paid to monitor our water, the response was enlightening: “It’s a hard topic to talk about without creating fear in the general public.” One official was quoted as saying that the public doesn’t know how to interpret the information. It was like they were saying that we are just the stupid people who pay the bills.

[Laying Blame Where Blame Is Deserved](#)

It must be noted that people working at water treatment plants across America are in general doing a good job scrubbing the water they send through to the tap. They have to; it is required by the EPA. The ones not keeping up with the times, as far as the pollutants in the water are concerned, are the EPA and Congress.

The Environmental Working Group has done studies on the nation’s water supply. They claim to have identified 260 contaminants – 141 that are not regulated. Incidentally, no pharmaceuticals are currently being regulated. In essence, all 141 chemicals are allowed to be in the water, at any quantity, and that water can still be called “safe for drinking.” So for example, if a person suffering from low blood platelets drank water polluted with a blood thinning drug, he could be placed in a greater health danger for having done so. Now apply this concept to every medical condition and it isn’t fear mongering to see the potential danger.

Officials would have us believe that small amounts of drugs won’t hurt anybody. The above example exposes that falsehood. Beyond that let’s remember that we are dealing with chemicals and nearly everyone knows that combining multiple chemicals will make new chemicals, often unpredictable chemicals. Ever hear that you should never mix ammonia with bleach? Alone they are powerful chemicals; combined they make a gas that kills. The absolute truth is that no one knows how combinations of drugs and pollutants can hurt the body.

You can see how big cities in your area do when it comes to water quality by visiting EWG’s Big City Water Rankings.

[The EPA Is Stonewalling](#)

The EPA appears to be in bed with chemical and pharmaceutical companies. There are a few reasons to believe this. First, the EPA has ignored three deadlines for setting regulations on the 141 unregulated contaminants mentioned above. Second, the EPA is approving, on average, two new chemicals daily for use. At least 43% have no safety studies performed on them before their approval.

[Let's Talk Congress](#)

As far as water safety is concerned, Congress has been, for the most part, absent.

[The Bush Administration Worked To Hinder Water Safety Laws](#)

The previous White House undermined the integrity of the nation's water on a regular basis. Here are some of the major actions they took:

- Made pesticides exempt from the Clean Water Act
- Nullified, through lack of enforcement, Virginia's river dumping laws on nitrogen and phosphorous
- Exempted oil and gas developers from laws restricting the injection of chemicals underground
- Allowed Pennsylvania coal plants to increase the amount of selenium they can release to the waterways
- Reduced 500 million in spending on clean water programs
- Removed protection on 20 million acres of America's wetlands (streams, lakes, pond, etc.)

Time will tell what the current Administration will do on this issue.

[Important Numbers](#)

So, let's get a grasp on the present and future of this issue. First, it has been fairly well established that once polluted, groundwater can take thousands of years to become fresh again. Tainted groundwater is a sign that the ground itself is starting to become saturated with these same chemicals.

[Some facts:](#)

- In 2002, 110 billion pounds of commercial fertilizer was spread on 248 million acres in America. That is an area the size of 2 1/2 Californias.
- During 2003, US industries released 220 million pounds of chemicals into the nation's waterways.
- Cities are dumping an average of 60 gallons per person daily into the sewers. This includes vehicle emissions, the breakdown of road surfaces and all the various home and yard wastes.

[Of the 141 unregulated contaminates:](#)

- 52 have been linked to cancer
- 41 to reproductive toxicity
- 36 to developmental toxicity
- 16 to immune system damage
- and 46 had no available health information.

[What You Can Do](#)

Well, you can write your Congressperson. In reality, change often happens from the bottom up, not the top down. If you are

interested in this subject you can become involved in some local group working on water issues.

The next several parts of this series will concentrate on various water filtering systems and the benefits of water on the body. Purchasing a water purifying system is the best action one can take to ensure their drinking water is fresh.



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