

# EDITOR'S BOOK REVIEW

## THE DRINKING WATER BOOK

Sub title: How to Eliminate Harmful Toxins from Your Water

By Colin Ingram Available at Amazon

Editor's Note: This is an absolutely excellent book written on a very difficult subject. While we cannot verify all this information, the author not only did a tremendous amount of research, he planned the book in a coherent and cohesive manner that allows the reader to get to the information in an organized way. The book is well-edited and we recommend it as an unusually efficient and easily-used resource.

The author starts with some quick tips:

1. Getting water from a tap, let the water run at full flow for ten seconds, then slow down to half flow or less to fill your container. This will flush out pollutants that have attached (or grown) to the faucet.
2. If you want water for a hot drink, use cold water and heat it to avoid getting pollutants from your hot water heater.
3. If you use a portable or detachable filter, store it in the refrigerator when not in use to slow growth of microorganisms on the filter.
4. Once bottled water has been open for two days, store in refrigerator.
5. All water utilities are required to send customers an annual water quality report. If you don't receive one, ask for it. It is free. It should alert you to any contaminants detected above federal or state permitted levels.
6. If you use a well, have your water tested at least once a year.
7. Fluoridation: Sound arguments for and against it. The author recommends against.
8. Don't drink chlorinated tap water on a regular basis.
9. Distilled water is fine but be careful of the containers you store it in.
10. Is bottled water safer than tap water from a public water supply? It depends on the type and brand of bottled water...some are, some aren't.

This book came about because, a few years ago, the author lived in a mountainous rural area far removed from all obvious sources of pollution where an epidemic of cancer was spreading among the scattered residents. This cancer was known to be environmentally induced so something had to be causing it. Finally, a trace of a chemical was found in the supposedly pure water supplies. Everyone said it was harmless so the author went on a quest for information as to whether it was actually harmful or not. This journey took him to public waterworks, county and state health agencies, testing laboratories, universities and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) as well as toxicologists and epidemiologists, bottled water companies and manufacturers of water purifiers. This culminated in a multiyear research program (with no grants or other assistance to prejudice the results) and the founding of a drinking water research center as well as this book.

Here are some of his findings: Although your public health officials may claim your drinking water is safe, they're only guessing. That's because their guesses are based on what "safe" and "unsafe" levels of pollutants are and this is often based on incomplete data.

Federal and state standards for drinking water safety are inadequate in several ways: They do not cover all the toxic substances that may be in your water; many smaller public water systems are exempt and almost no studies have been done on the increased toxicity caused by combinations of pollutants in water. In many cases, standards have been set at levels that accommodate industry rather than protect public health

There are probably trace amounts of chemicals known to cause cancer in essentially every public water supply in this country.

Some water purifiers for home use create and add new pollutants to the water even as they remove other pollutants.

Many of the water tests performed for consumers in the US test for aesthetic qualities (taste, smell, color, clarity) rather than for potentially dangerous pollutants.

Many so-called experts may not be as "expert" as they claim or the expertise of many may not cover all areas.

The author of this book has tried to put it all together, including tips and information you won't find in any other popular source, such as a summary of what is known about what kinds of water have been scientifically shown to help maintain and improve your health. This book is based on years of extensive research on water quality and on actual testing of products in actual installations in homes.

Chapter 1 covers several questions and answers such as: Why should I be concerned about my drinking water? Who is responsible for safe drinking water? Should I have my water tested? What should I do about my drinking water?

Chapter 2 addresses water pollutants and the risks they pose to our health. It covers nuisance pollutants like those that cause discomfort or inconvenience...they cause the water to taste, smell or look bad or they make doing your laundry or dishes less effective. Next, it covers health-threatening pollutants which fall into the following categories: Pathogens, Toxic minerals and metals, Organic chemicals, Radioactive substances and Additives. You will learn a lot in these pages!

Chapter 3 tells you how to find out what is in your water. Undoubtedly, you will be surprised! What is likely to be in your water if you live in a city? What is likely to be in your water if you live in a small town? What is likely to be in your water in a private system? What is likely to be in the water in the wild? What is likely to be in the water of your region? Testing your water...bogus versus genuine water tests. What you need to know about water testing laboratories. Tests you can do yourself.

Chapter 4 covers the best drinking water for good health and addresses distilled water, hard versus soft water, the benefits of minerals in water, water from natural sources, health claims for exotic waters, the message from water crystals and how much water should you drink? This was very interesting as he says that, as of this writing, he has found no credible evidence to indicate that coffee, tea, juice, milk and other liquids contribute any less to the body's water supply than drinking plain water. He points out that various studies show that every aspect of bodily functions can be impaired by insufficient consumption of liquids causing an

inability to neutralize and eliminate harmful substances. An interesting aside is that insufficient consumption of liquids causes the body to GAIN weight! Fat cannot be completely metabolized, or converted to energy, without adequate water in the body.

Chapter 5 gives you four simple ways to improve tap water without special equipment.

Chapter 6 covers bottled water, vended water and bulk water stores. He gets into who is responsible for what. In theory, bottled water is regulated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and by each state. In FDA terms, all bottled water is legally defined as a beverage. Water utilities providing your tap water are regulated by the EPA and all beverages are regulated by the FDA so the FDA regulations for pollutants in bottled water generally follow those established by the EPA but, in addition, require all bottled water companies to adhere to stringent sanitary practices in the bottling process. There are interesting exemptions/exceptions you should know as well. He ends this chapter with good information on storing water.

Chapters 7-12 cover how water purifiers work: filters, distillers, reverse osmosis purifiers, pitcher models and several other methods. In these chapters, he actually covers models and brands and costs and rates them. Check out chapter 12 for good information on camping filters, sports bottle water filters and travel filters.

Chapter 13 goes on to emergency disinfection of drinking water and storing water.

He adds a Radon Supplement in Appendix A and gives us an excellent glossary in Appendix B and devotes Appendix C to Resources.

We recommend that you read this book to learn how to best use, protect and store the water you need every day.