

California's landfills each year, taking 1000 years to biodegrade and leaking toxic additives such as phthalates into the groundwater. Nationally, landfills absorb 38 billion water bottles every year--more than \$1 billion worth of plastic.

Based on current trends, these environmental burdens imposed by the industry appear likely to grow. The global consumption of bottled water—exceeding 41 billion gallons in 2005—increased 57 percent over the previous five years.

This product generates substantial waste and pollution despite the fact that, by objective standards, it often falls short of the quality of San Jose's own tap water. The Natural Resources Defense Council tested 103 U.S. bottled water brands and found 25% contained chemical or bacterial contamination. Also, drinking water standards set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for tap water exceed those standards set by the FDA for bottled water.

The City's role in halting its purchase of single-bottled water with City funds will set an environmental example, promote the consumption of tap water and reaffirm its commitment to providing a healthy, safe, reliable supply of water. The fiscal savings could be significant as well, over tens of thousands of dollars.

Some exceptions may need to be made, such as for emergency preparedness, and large, multi-gallon container purchases of water for community events and venues where tap water does not appear readily accessible. The staff's analysis should assess the need for such exceptions, where appropriate.