

## **Bottled Water Growth and Consumption Accelerated**

The [International Bottled Water Association \(IBWA\)](#), in conjunction with Beverage Marketing Corporation (BMC), has released 2015 bottled water statistics, which show that Americans' consumption of bottled water increased by 7.9 percent and bottled water sales are up 8.9 percent since the previous year. BMC now indicates that bottled water is poised to overtake carbonated soft drinks as America's largest beverage category by volume by 2017, if not by the end of 2016.

"Consumer demand for bottled water looks likely to remain strong in the years ahead. Increases in per capita consumption indicate enthusiasm for a product that consumers regard as a healthful alternative to other beverages," said Michael Bellas, BMC Chairman and CEO. "Americans increased their annual consumption by more than 11 gallons, from 25.4 gallons per person in 2005 to 36.5 gallons a decade later. During the same period, per capita consumption of carbonated soft drinks dropped by 12.4 gallons. Per capita consumption of other major beverage categories, like milk and fruit beverages, also fell."

Reflecting a clear trend of consumers increasingly choosing healthy, convenient, zero-calorie bottled water, BMC reported that by 2015, bottled water had achieved a new volume record – almost three billion gallons higher than it had been in 2007. Soft drinks, on the other hand, underwent their 11th consecutive year of volume reductions in 2015. Bottled water sales increased by 8.9 percent in 2015 and now total \$14.2 billion (wholesale). In 2015, total US bottled water consumption grew by 7.9 percent to 11.7 billion gallons, up from 10.87 billion gallons in 2014. In addition, per capita consumption is up 7.1 percent in 2015, with every person in America drinking an average of 36.5 gallons of bottled water last year. "There are many attributes that contribute to bottled water's undeniable appeal to US consumers," said Chris Hogan, IBWA VP of Communications. "Among them are bottled water's healthfulness, convenience, reliability and safety."

Bottled water's versatility makes it suitable for consumption at any time of day and in just about any setting or situation. It doesn't need to be kept ice cold (like soft drinks or juice) or warm (like conventional coffee or tea). And various packaging types, ranging from five and three gallon bottles used in homes and offices to single-serve containers sold at retail locations facilitate a variety of uses. Amid worries about obesity, diabetes and other health matters, bottled water's lack of calories and artificial ingredients, convenience and refreshing taste attracts health-conscious consumers. "Although it has occasionally been compared with tap water, bottled water, in fact, realized its prominence as a healthful choice for consumers seeking to reduce their consumption of other less healthy packaged beverages. While some consumers have turned away from regular, full-calorie sodas in favor of their diet versions, many others transitioned to bottled water instead," said Bellas. Indeed, as some consumers became wary of artificial sweeteners, they abandoned diet as well as regular soda, while bottled water volume just got bigger.

The bottled water industry is utilizing a variety of measures to continue reducing its environmental impact. All bottled water containers are 100-percent recyclable and many bottled water companies are already using recycled plastic in their bottles. Some are already producing 100-percent recycled PET plastic bottled water containers. "Bottled water's environmental footprint is the lowest of any packaged beverage, according to a life cycle assessment conducted by Quantis in 2010," said Hogan. "Bottled water has the smallest

water and energy use footprint of any packaged beverage. When it comes to overall water use, the bottled water industry is actually a small and efficient water user. Bottled water uses only 0.01 percent of all water used in the US. The results of a [benchmarking study](#) show that the amount of water and energy used to produce bottled water products in North America is less than all other types of packaged beverages. On average, only 1.32 liters of water (including the liter of water consumed) and 0.24 mega joules of energy are used to produce one liter of finished bottled water. For more information about bottled water and recycling, please visit IBWA's [website](#).