

# More signing up for bottled water

## HEAD-SCRATCHER: Many prefer to pay for the inconvenience

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CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

Even with the health and environmental concerns about plastic bottles, more Canadians are turning to the 18.5-litre containers and away from the tap as their source of drinking water at home, Statistics Canada said yesterday.

Almost three in 10 households reported drinking bottled water in their home in 2006, says a study, pub-

lished in EnviroStats, Statistics Canada's quarterly bulletin on environmental and sustainable development statistics.

Earlier numbers from the International Council of Bottled Water Associations estimated bottled water produced for Canadian consumption doubled to 1.5 billion litres in 2003 from 820 million litres in 2000, the study said.

"This is not presumably a convenience factor," said Neil Rothwell, who authored the study. "I can't think of anything more convenient than turning on the tap to get a drink of water. Something is driving these households

to drink bottled water."

The report's release comes amid debate surrounding the use of bottled water in schools and in municipalities across the country. In the past month, councils in London, Ont., and Nelson have banned bottles from city offices, parks and recreational areas.

School boards in Toronto and in the Ottawa region are to vote this year on banning bottles from their schools. Several universities have followed suit with "bottle free zones."

The bans are in reaction to a mix of health concerns, about drinking from a plastic, potentially toxic con-

tainer, and a growing environmental desire to cut down on disposable containers.

Seniors were the least likely to drink from a bottle of water at home, with only 17 per cent of them choosing bottles.

Apartment dwellers were five per cent more likely to use the tap than single-family homes.

### What do you think?

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According to StatsCan, more households are turning to bottled water, such as Richmond's Canadian Springs product. — FILE PHOTO

## Wet Spring Weather Means Huge 4 Day

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