

## U.S. town bans small bottles of water

4<sup>th</sup> January, 2013



The U.S. town of Concord in Massachusetts state has banned stores from selling water in bottles that are smaller than one litre. Stores who sell the water will have

to pay a \$50 fine. The new law is the result of a three-year campaign by local resident Jean Hill. Ms Hill first told people about the idea at a meeting in 2010. She wants people to drink more tap water and use fewer plastic bottles, which she says end up littering streets, rivers and the countryside. She said: "Bottled water is bad for the environment, our health, and our public water systems. Concord's decision to go bottled-water free is a great example of how communities can promote our most essential public service: the tap."

Many people are unhappy with the new law, which started on New Year's Day. The bottled water industry said small bottles are very important for people's health. It said banning small bottles would mean people will drink more small bottles of cola and other soft drinks. Shops can still sell small bottles of other kinds of drinks. Local stores and restaurants say they will lose customers as people will simply drive to nearby towns to buy small bottles of water. One local resident said the new law is dangerous to her health. Ann Davidson, 82, said tap water is bad for her health so she has to buy water, but 1.5 litre bottles are too heavy for her. People buy 50 billion small bottles of water each year in the USA.

Sources: *BBC News* / *Boston Globe*

### Writing

*We should all drink tap water instead of bottled water to help the environment. Discuss.*

### Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

*banned / selling water / \$50 fine / campaign / local resident / plastic bottles / essential / unhappy / industry / local stores / soft drinks / bad for our health / too heavy*

### True / False

- A town in the USA has banned all bottled water from stores. T / F
- Stores that sell small bottles of water will have to pay a \$50 fine. T / F
- A campaigner wants more people to drink tap water. T / F
- The campaigner said bottled water isn't good for the environment. T / F
- Very few people are unhappy with the new law. T / F
- Local stores and restaurants think the small-water-bottle ban is good. T / F
- An elderly lady said tap water wasn't good for her health. T / F
- Over 500 million small bottles of water are sold in the USA every year. T / F

### Synonym Match

- |               |                     |
|---------------|---------------------|
| 1. banned     | a. neighbouring     |
| 2. fine       | b. important        |
| 3. littering  | c. annually         |
| 4. promote    | d. put an end to    |
| 5. essential  | e. business         |
| 6. industry   | f. citizen          |
| 7. drinks     | g. penalty          |
| 8. nearby     | h. encourage        |
| 9. resident   | i. beverages        |
| 10. each year | j. making a mess of |

### Discussion – Student A

- Do you understand why people are unhappy with the new law?
- Will the new law mean people get unhealthier because they will buy cola instead of water?
- Are the water companies interested in our health or their profits?
- Is the new law unfair on small shops and restaurants?
- Why ban water in one town when people can buy it in nearby towns?
- Could you drink only water and no other drinks?
- Should there be a system where some people can buy small bottles?
- How important is water to you?

## Phrase Match

- |   |                           |
|---|---------------------------|
| 1. water in bottles that are              | a. more tap water         |
| 2. Stores who sell the water will have to | b. law is dangerous       |
| 3. She wants people to drink              | c. pay a \$50 fine        |
| 4. Bottled water is bad                   | d. with the new law       |
| 5. promote our most essential             | e. lose customers         |
| 6. Many people are unhappy                | f. smaller than one litre |
| 7. colas and other                        | g. are too heavy          |
| 8. restaurants say they will              | h. public service         |
| 9. One local resident said the new        | i. soft drinks            |
| 10. 1.5 litre bottles                     | j. for the environment    |

## Discussion – Student B

- What springs to mind when you hear the word 'water'?
- What do you think of bottled water?
- Is bottled water pretty much the same as tap water?
- What do you think of the banning of small bottles of water?
- Are plastic bottles a problem in your town?
- Should we all buy fewer things in plastic bottles?
- We rarely bought bottled water 50 years ago. Why do we buy so much today? Is it clever marketing by water companies?
- Would your life change much if all bottled water was banned?

## Spelling

- the result of a three-year gmpacnai
- local erstdnei Jean Hill
- streets, rivers and the syucitndroe
- Bottled water is bad for the tmevnnieron
- Concord's cionieds
- our most isatneels public service
- The bottled water tyirdsnu
- very rpointmta
- Local stores and utrsnraaste
- lose csurstome
- ugseronad to her health
- 50 bilnilo small bottles

### Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. g	3. j	4. h	5. b
6. e	7. i	8. a	9. f	10. c

## Role Play

**Environmentalist** - You think the idea of banning small plastic bottles of water is great. Tell the others three reasons why. You think bottled water is a crazy idea when healthy water is free from the tap. Bottled water is expensive and we don't need it. The plastic bottles are very bad for the environment.

**Bottled water company boss** - You are shocked at the new law banning small water bottles. Tell the others three reasons why. Water is essential for people's health. Banning small bottles will mean people will drink cola, and that's unhealthy. You totally disagree with everything the environmentalist says.

**Local store owner** - Banning small water bottles is terrible news for your business. You will lose a lot of money. There are other ways to help the environment. Tell the others there things people can do. Tell the city leader (s)he must end the law that bans small water bottles or your business will finish.

**City leader** - You think the idea of banning small plastic bottles of water is great. Tell the others three reasons why. You think it is time for people to take action and help the environment. People should fill up their own bottles with tap water. Local stores must find other ways to make money.

## Speaking - Plastic

Which of these plastic things should be banned? Rank them and share your rankings with your partner(s) often. Put the one that should be banned first at the top.

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| • plastic bottles | • supermarket bags    |
| • CD boxes        | • garden furniture    |
| • disposable cups | • microwave packaging |
| • toothbrushes    | • shower curtains     |

### Answers – True False

a	F	b	T	c	T	d	T	e	F	f	F	g	T	h	F
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.