

Bottled Water Dispenser and Drinking Water System Units Cleaning Reference Guide

Revised: October 21, 2020

This guidance provides recommendations on safely using office bottled water dispensers and drinking water system units that have been unused for extended periods of time. There are safety concerns with drinking bottled water from a unit that has not been used or flushed out for extended periods of time.

Based on information provided by the [CDC](#), there is no evidence COVID-19 is transmitted through drinking water, recreational water, or wastewater. The risk of COVID-19 transmission through water is expected to be low. The standards for bottled water are set by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The FDA bases its standards on the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) standards for tap water.

For more basic information on bottled water use please review [brochure provided by the EPA](#). When using a bottled water dispensing system (i.e. water cooler, etc.) the unit should be cleaned and maintained according to the manufacturer's recommendations.

Manufacturer suggests routine cleaning and maintenance be done twice a year. It is recommended you do not consume water from a dispenser that has been unused for an extended period of time. **Follow these steps to safely use your bottled water dispensing system after the unit has been unused for an extended period:**

- Discard the partially used (opened) bottle.
- Drain the unit's reservoir and thoroughly clean the unit in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations or you can get the dispenser cleaned or serviced by an outside service provider.
 - If you elect to have the unit cleaned or serviced by an outside service provider, please contact your Bottled Water Service vendor to facilitate work on your unit.
 - For water provided by Nestle Waters North America (our Campus primary water provider), they provide a service which is offered at a cost of \$59.99 based on the most current price agreement:
 - Bottled Water Service Vendor contact info:
Lucrecia Castellon | Key Account Manager
Nestlé Waters North America
619 North Main Street Orange, California 92868
M 714-337-8447 | F 714-639-9471
lucrecia.castellon@waters.nestle.com
 - For all other vendor information, contact [Procurement Services](#) or if the unit has a label, contact them with the information provided on the unit.

- After verifying the “Best By” date on the new water bottle, install the new bottle on the dispenser.
 - A “Best By” date, which applies only to unopened products, is a 2 year or 1 1/2 year shelf life window, depending on the product, by which the consumer may measure "the age" of the water. You can tell if the water has been bottled for 2 years or 1 1/2 years, by identifying the “best by” date on the bottle prior to use.

- Wash hands before changing a water bottle.

- Gently wipe down the surface area of the equipment using the appropriate disinfectant.

- Wipe down the dispenser with disinfectant around the water-dispensing hot and cold spigots, levers or faucets.

- Wipe the top and neck of the new bottle with a clean sterile cloth.

- Remove the drip tray and wash with mild dishwashing soap.

- Do not touch the end of the water cooler with your hands or any items such as glasses, cups, or small water bottles that have come into contact with your mouth.

- Continue with a no-contact water delivery service. If you have any special instructions, communicate with the vendor via email, by phone, or leave a note for your delivery person.

For additional questions email safety@uci.edu