

podrinkingwater

## Drinking water on the Campus

A new study by WWF (World Wildlife Fund) showed that each year 1.5 million tons of plastic are used to make water bottles. The International Bottled Water Association points out that the bottles could be recycled. However toxic chemicals can still be released into the environment during the manufacturing and the disposing of the bottles. The WWF recommends to use tap water instead, to save our environment and wallet.

“At Stanford we have one of the best tap water quality in the States; bottled water couldn’t be better.” Environmental Quality Engineer Tracy L. Ingebrigtsen said yesterday in her office at the Stanford University Facilities Operations Building. With a cup of water in her hand she continues, “It’s perfect for drinking because it’s tested several times a week by the water department at Stanford and by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission. I drink it everyday.”

The Stanford Utilities Annual Water Quality Reports tells that our drinking water comes from the SFPUC (San Francisco Public Utilities Commission). The water comes from snowmelt in the protected Yosemite National Park. It is stored in the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir and delivered 150 miles to the Bay Area through series of tunnels and pipelines. It is

treated but not filtered due to its high quality.

However Stanford student Jen Lee said, “I would never drink tap water; it is gross. I remember this one time, it came out yellow”.

“Yes, this could happen,” acknowledges Tracy. “It could be colored if the pipes are not used for a few days. But this isn’t dangerous at all,” she recommends, “just flush it for a few minutes”.

Neil Ray, also a Stanford student, prefers bottled water because it contains fewer chemicals and tastes better. Tracy argues that “we have to put chlorine inside the tap water because we are transporting it from San Francisco to Stanford, and chlorine is important to disinfect the water. But we are going to switch to chloramine which has the same influence but doesn’t change the taste”.