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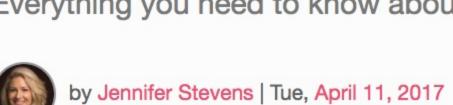
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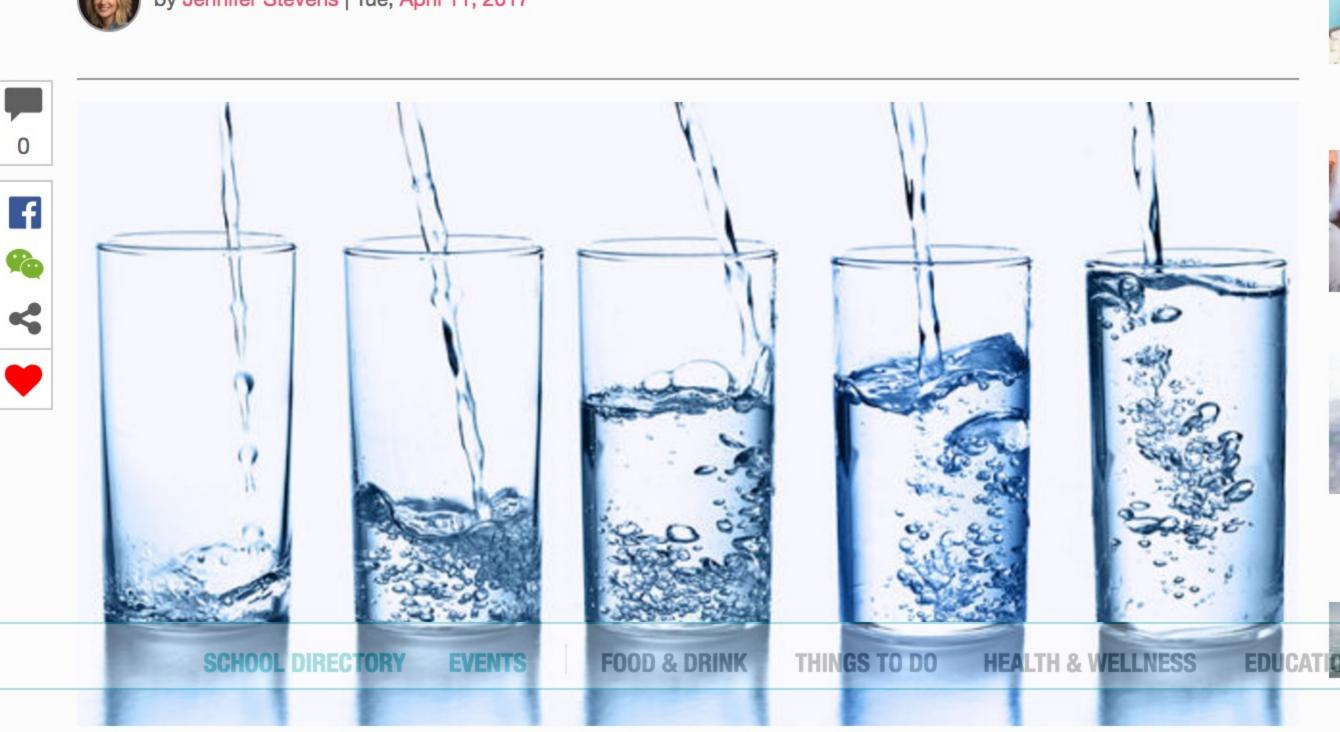
Everything you need to know about tap water, ordering bottled water and buying filters

FOOD & DRINK

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Whether you're already a Shanghai expat, or thinking of making the big move, we're sure you know all about China's struggles with air pollution. But what about water pollution? We don't mean to scare you, but it's something you should think about.

According to David Wang, General Manager of water filtration and air treatment company Greenwave, "While the quality of tap water is much better than it was a few years ago, the amount of chlorine and heavy metals it contains is still a major concern."

Where does Shanghai's tap water come from?



of Shanghai's tap water previously sourced from the highly polluted Huangpu River. In 2012, the reservoir (located in the Yangtze River), began supplying nearly 60% of the city's tap water. The Ministry of Environmental Protection has five categories for water quality—from first class, which

You'll be happy to know that in 2010, the Qingcaosha Reservoir became operational, replacing much

is drinkable water, to fifth class, which is heavily polluted, odorous and dark-colored. "Just to give you an idea, Qingcaosha is class two and Huangpu is class four," says Wang.

The 17 billion RMB (\$2.67 billion USD) reservoir project is a good start, but with 30% of Shanghai's tap water still coming from the class 4-polluted Huangpu River, it's not enough. Wang tells us that the Songjiang district and parts of Qingpu and Minhang districts are still being supplied by the river, and there's no clear plan in place for change.

What's in the water?

- Chlorine. In an effort to kill bacteria and viruses in the tap water, the Chinese government requires that the chlorine levels be higher than .05m/L. While this sounds like a good thing (and it is to some degree), the high levels of chlorine wreak havoc on your skin and hair. When ingested or absorbed by your skin, the chemical has been shown to cause a host of ailments, with the U.S. Council Of Environmental Quality claiming that cancer risk is 93% higher among people who drink chlorinated water than those who do not.
- Heavy metals. Lead, mercury, aluminum, cadmium, chromium and copper have been found through water testing. This is largely caused by the old pipes that transport the water—leaching metals, rust and sediment. The scary news here: metals cannot be removed by boiling the water or by using basic filters.
- Nitrites and nitrates. According to the Water Quality Association, these contaminants originate from pesticides, sewage and erosion of natural deposits. Most potential health effects are seen in infants under the age of six months, including Methemoglobinemia (blue baby syndrome).

Is bottled water safe?



Nestle or Nongfu suppliers. However, lately there has been a lot of talk about the prevalence of "fake" water. In fact, just last week Shanghai Daily reported that two men had been arrested for allegedly making 100,000 RMB from producing and selling fake drinking water in Yangpu District.

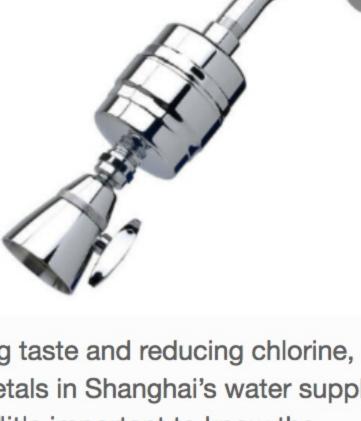
Wang says that if you order directly from the suppliers you'll be fine, but states, "We've conducted

many tests on bottled water, and the amount of bacteria is above the standard limit every time." He also mentions the problems associated with delivery, like the amount of time the bottles are left in the sun, how often they are cleaned and how often they are replaced (they should not be used longer than three years).

How about filters?







they are not the best method in tackling the small traces of heavy metals in Shanghai's water supply. Lien Vermeiren, General Manager of WATER UNITED also adds that "it's important to know the difference between water purification systems and units that simply enrich the water." She says that "using water ionizing machines are beneficial for alkalizing water, but that doesn't necessarily mean all the hazardous particles are taken out." The best filtration system to use across China is Reverse Osmosis, which removes all of the harmful pollutants listed above.

Shower and sink filters: Most people don't think about getting a filter for their shower or bathroom sink—that is, until they start having skin problems, or their hair becomes dry, or turns color from the high levels of chlorine. But it's not just aesthetics that you need to worry about; the chlorine can easily be absorbed by your skin in the shower, or ingested while brushing your teeth, which can lead to cardiovascular problems, high blood pressure and even cancer.

Greenwave: www.greenwavechina.cn

Where to buy your filters:

PureLiving: www.purelivingchina.com Renaud: www.renaudair.cn WATER UNITED: www.water-united.com

Useful Tips: • If you use bottled water, make sure to clean/disinfect your water cooler regularly (every month or

Tag:

- two), as bacteria grows inside. • Store your water bottles out of the sun and use within one week. Do not use unfiltered tap water to cook or wash fruits and vegetables. Use filtered or bottled
- water instead.

Clean water

• Install filters from one of the trusted companies listed above, and change filters regularly (usually every 3 months). Consider Reverse Osmosis for drinking water, but if you decide on bottles, call the company

directly (Nestle: 400-820-8898; Nongfu Spring: 400-809-6666).

water in Shanghai

water in China



water safety

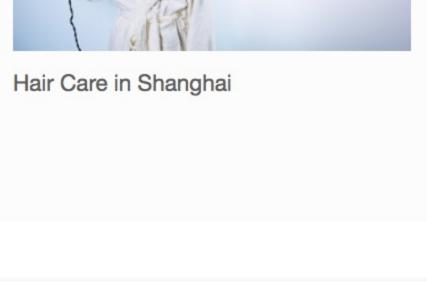




tap water

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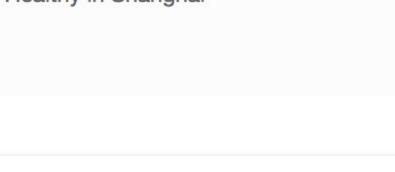
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