

# Open Source Water

Tap'd NY competes by selling bottles of New York City's delicious tap water

By [David Bollier](#)

Calling itself the “anti-bottled water bottled water,” a company called [Tap'd NY](#) is selling purified New York City tap water in bottles. “We don’t travel the world from Fiji to France seeking water or offer the usual bottled water gimmicks. We work with NYC’s public water system to source the world’s best tasting tap water, purify it through reverse osmosis and bottle it locally, leaving out ludicrous transportation miles.”

The company, founded by Craig Zucker in June 2008, markets itself as a mission-driven business. Its four-point corporate “manifesto” urges customers to “Drink tap water whenever possible. Buy local bottled water when tap isn’t convenient. Support NYC and our award-winning water.... [and] Always refill and recycle your bottle (it’s part of the deal).”



Tap'dNY combines jazzy, clever marketing with serious education and advocacy for public water. A neat trick. Still, there's some sort of postmodern dissonance in paying \$36 for a case of 24 Tap'dNY bottles while the company also advertises, “free refills at 500,000 NYC taps.” Is this like the Pet Rock craze of the 1970s — a marketable fad with a very short half-life?

You have to give the company credit: its tagline, “No glaciers were harmed making this water,” is very clever. So is its plan to sell refillable Sigg bottles with the company logo and tagline on the sides. Judging from the press coverage that the company has received in only four months, Tap'dNY may at least have the salutary effect of forcing the big bottled water companies to admit that yes, much of their water actually comes from the tap.

Maybe the next stage of this competition is for municipal water works to start their own branded lines of water to support their public mission directly. In any case, it's a welcome development to see open source water competing with the branded, proprietary versions.

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