

Monday, March 10, 2008

Think before you drink tap water.

Image from Library of Congress's website. I have long been grossed out about drinking tap water, which includes treated water originating from toilets. Filtering the water does not remove the toilet water. Spring water is not a perfect solution, not being regulated sufficiently to know the impurities that are there, and often (if not always) being chlorinated, just as tap water is chlorinated. Distilled water may be the safest and cleanest option, but if it is purchased in plastic bottles, the plastic can leach into the water, and the empty bottles create permanent waste pollution if not recycled. In yesterday's news is a revelation that a whole host of drugs (and not all localities test for presence of drugs -- here is a list of the impurities found in municipalities that have had their water tested), disinfectants, and other impurities are found in tap water, including where I live (see here, too). Aside from the question of why this story has taken so long to come to the surface, forefront, or both, it is unclear how harmful is the cumulative effect on human health from the otherwise minuscule amounts of such impurities per ounce of tap water. I suppose that the concentration of drugs in tap water is too small to yield a positive drug test of urine or blood, but who knows, considering all the false positive drug tests that victimize people already? This latest news about tap water unsafety likely will be a boon for the bottled water industry, at least for the short term. Cheers? Jon Katz.

Posted by Jon Katz in Drugs at 00:00