



## Legislation Details (With Text)

**File #:** 20-0028      **Version:** 1      **Name:**  
**Type:** Action Item      **Status:** Consent Agenda  
**File created:** 1/9/2020      **In control:** Board of County Commissioners  
**On agenda:** 1/13/2020      **Final action:**  
**Title:** Prohibit the Use of County Funds to Purchase Bottled Water  
**Sponsors:**  
**Indexes:**  
**Code sections:**  
**Attachments:** 1. Durham County Bottled Water Policy

| Date | Ver. | Action By | Action | Result |
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**Item:**  
**Prohibit the Use of County Funds to Purchase Bottled Water**

**Date of BOCC Meeting:** January 13, 2020

**Request for Board Action:**

The Board is requested to adopt the proposed policy to prohibit the use of county funds to purchase bottled water.

Single-use plastic water bottles pose problems for the environment and human health, as well as being an expensive way to stay hydrated. Bottled water requires up to 2,000 times the energy used to produce tap water and it takes at least 450 years for a plastic bottle to degrade. While plastic bottles are recyclable, only about 30% of them are recycled in the US. Those that are not recycled end up either in the landfill or out in the environment as litter. Studies of water quality in plastic bottles have shown significant contamination of microplastics and chemical. In addition, water in single-use bottles costs more than \$7.50/gallon or about 3,700 times more than tap water.

Cost effective alternatives to single-use plastic water bottles are readily available, including using water dispensers or pitchers and cups. While reusable cups are best, paper cups are an acceptable alternative when reusables are not practical because paper cups will at least degrade if they are released into the environment.

The proposed policy allows exemptions in the case of public health or other emergencies and for occupational health and safety, where providing safe tap water in cups or reusable water bottles is not a feasible option.

**Alignment with Strategic Plan:** This item aligns with Strategic Plan Goal 4 (Environmental Stewardship and Community Prosperity), and Goal 5 (Accountable, Efficient, and Visionary Government).

**Resource Persons:** Tobin L. Freid, Sustainability Manager; Peri Manns, Interim Director of Engineering and Environmental Services

**County Manager's Recommendation:** The County Manager recommends that the Board adopt the proposed

policy to prohibit the use of County funds to purchase bottled water.

County Manager: \_\_\_\_\_