

REGULATION OF MINERAL WATER ACCORDING TO FDA REQUIREMENTS

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Mineral water is water from a mineral spring that contains various minerals, such as salts and sulfur compounds. Mineral water may be effervescent due to contained gases.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration classifies mineral water as water containing at least 250 parts per million total dissolved solids (TDS), originating from a geologically and physically protected underground water source. No minerals may be added to this water. In many places, however, the term "mineral water" is colloquially used to mean any bottled carbonated water or soda water, as opposed to tap water.

Bottled mineral water is an increasingly popular beverage in the all over the world. Total U.S. bottled water sales have grown from roughly 6% to more than 13% per year over the last five years, according to data from MarketResearch.com and from the Beverage Marketing Corp (BMC).

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) are both responsible for the safety of drinking water in U. S. EPA regulates public mineral water (tap water), while FDA regulates also bottled drinking water.

According to the International Bottled Water Association, bottled water was the second most popular beverage in the U.S. in 2005, with Americans consuming more than 7.5 million gallons of bottled water – an

average of 26 gallons per person.

The Food and Drug Administration regulates bottled water as a food. The Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA) provides FDA with broad regulatory authority over food that is introduced or delivered for introduction into interstate commerce.

The Food and Drug Administration has established specific regulations for bottled mineral water in Title 21 of the Code of Federal Regulations (21 CFR), including standard of identity regulations (21 CFR § 165.110) that define different types of bottled water, such as spring water and mineral water, and standard of quality regulations (21 CFR §165.110) that establish allowable levels for contaminants (chemical, physical, microbial and radiological) in bottled water.

The Food and Drug Administration also has established Current Good Manufacturing Practice (CGMP) regulations for the processing and bottling of bottled drinking water (21 CFR part 129). Labeling regulations (21 CFR part 101) and CGMP regulations (21 CFR part 110) for foods in general also apply to bottled water. It is worth noting that bottled water is one of the few foods for which The Food and Drug Administration has developed specific CGMP regulations or such a detailed standard of quality.

In conclusion we can say that bottled mineral water is regulated as a food under the FFDCA by the Food and Drug Administration. Specific Food and Drug Administration regulations in the bottled mineral water area cover CGMPs for bottled water production and a standard of identity and quality for bottled water. Recent regulatory activity on bottled water includes adoption of allowable levels of certain disinfectants and disinfection byproducts in the quality standard for bottled mineral water and publication of a feasibility study on the appropriate methods for providing consumers with information on the contents of bottled mineral water.