

## **Health Advice in Relation to Reuse of Disposable Water Bottles**

Improper and long-term repeated use of disposable bottles for holding water may give rise to concerns of microbiological growth and migration of chemicals from the materials of the bottle. Also, Improper cleaning and handling of these bottles might pose potential health risk. Therefore, residents who reuse the disposable water bottles to collect water from standpipes and temporary water points for transitory storage should take the following advice:

1. Other than water, disposable water bottles should not hold other materials as manufacturers may not be able to ensure the safety of their bottles for uses beyond which they are designed for.
2. If it is decided to use plastic bottles more than once, it is recommended that bottles be emptied, thoroughly washed and dried before reuse. This is because microorganism can generally come from air, hands or anything that comes in contact with the mouth of the bottle. With time, moisture and warm conditions, bacteria can multiply to harmful levels.
3. Before refilling bottles with water, users should examine the disposable water bottle to ensure no damage.
4. If disposable water bottles are used to hold water, this should be limited to short periods of one or two days.
5. For drinking and potable purpose, water should be poured out from the reused disposable water bottles and thoroughly boiled before use.
6. Avoid drinking directly from the reused disposable water bottles as germs may be introduced during contact of the bottle with the environment and are allowed to grow with time.
7. Disposable water bottles should not be exposed to sunlight directly or used to contain hot water or reused for a long time. This is because the migration of any plastic increases with temperature and time of contact. Although increased migration of chemicals from disposable water bottles does not necessarily pose a health risk, it could change organoleptic properties of water such as taste, colour and odour.

*Department of Health*

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