

Why Do Drinking Water Have Expired Dates?



Introduction

It is usual practise in the world of packaged beverages to find an expiry date printed on the bottles, even bottled water. It is crucial to note, however, that bottled water does not expire despite the appearance of an expiry date. This presentation will look at the reasons for including expiry dates on bottled products and explain why bottled water is safe to drink even after the stated expiry date.

Background

In the United States, the state of New Jersey established legislation requiring the inclusion of expiry dates on all food and beverage packaging, including plain water, in 1987. This regulation's major goal was to standardise packaging across the industry.

Impact of Temperature and Light

Temperature and light can degrade the plastic packing material's integrity, allowing plastic components to leak into the drink. Prolonged storage can also reduce the efficiency of the packaging's stabilising chemicals (antioxidants), increasing the risk of bacterial contamination. Furthermore, water has the ability to absorb other chemical gases from the surroundings, resulting in a flavour shift.

Safety on Bottled Drinks

Regardless of these issues, it is crucial to note that the majority of bottles used to package beverages, including bottled water, are composed of plastics such as polyethylene terephthalate (PET - RIC No.1) and high-density polyethylene (HDPE - RIC No.2). Despite the possibility of leakage, both of these plastics are among the safest and offer no health risk.

Expired Dates on Bottled Drinks

Some bottled beverages have a "best by" date that indicates a term of two years or fewer from the container date. This date indicates how long the beverage has been packaged for. Storage circumstances, light and temperature exposure (e.g., leaving the bottle in a car or direct sunlight), and the type of packaging material (especially plastic) can all have an impact on the taste of the drink.

