



OPINION – EDITORIAL as seen in the *Orlando Sentinel*, April 15, 2008

Water permitting process

I'm writing with regard to your recent series about bottled water. We appreciate that you pointed out that [Nestlé Waters](#) is a relatively small water user. Less clear, however, was the process by which we get our water permits.

Florida's water resources are held in trust by the state for use by residents and businesses.

Any water user, whether it's an individual, municipality, golf course, dairy, farm, mine, power plant or other entity, can get a permit provided it meets the requirements of the local water-management district. The state charges a fee to apply for the permit, but does not charge anyone -- individual or business -- for the water use itself. Nestlé Waters was treated the same as other businesses.

Statewide, Nestlé Waters is permitted to use just over 2 million gallons of water per day. Many businesses and farms can use far more. For perspective, agriculture accounts for 68 percent of America's water use. Municipalities use 20 percent, while our industry accounts for about 0.004 percent.

With the water we do use, Nestlé Waters provides 1,000 high-wage jobs with benefits in Florida. The company also pays millions of dollars each year in state and local taxes.

In Madison County, the company made it clear from the outset that the plant would create between 200 and 250 jobs in the first five to 10 years of operations. By 2006, the company reached the 200-employee milestone and continues to grow.

One local official has said, "They've been a very good neighbor, and they've kept every promise and they've filled every job they said they'd fill."

ROB FISHER, Director of Supply Chain Operations, [Nestlé Waters North America](#)