



Nestlé Waters North America Responds to *St. Petersburg Times* News Story Understanding Water Law and Use in Florida

Florida's water resources are held in trust by the state for use by residents and businesses. Property owners who want to collect water must first get a permit. Any water user, whether it's an individual, municipality, golf course, dairy farm, mine, power plant or other entity, can do this 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 is treated the same as any other water user.

Statewide in Florida, Nestlé Waters is permitted to use just over two million gallons of water per day. As business and industry goes, bottled water is a very small user of water. There are individual dairy farms that use just as much. Many businesses and farms use much more. Nationwide, the bottled water industry as a whole accounts for less than 0.004 percent of all groundwater use, agriculture accounts for 68 percent and municipalities use 20 percent.

As a result of what water we do use, Nestlé Waters provides 1,000 high-wage jobs with benefits in Florida. In addition, the company pays millions of dollars each year in state and local taxes.

In Madison County, the company said from the outset that the plant would create between 200 and 250 jobs in the first five to 10 years of operations. (SOURCE: Florida Trend Magazine, Sept. 2003) In just under three years, the company reached the 200-employee milestone and continues to grow.

The company has had a positive impact in Madison County, just as it has had in Zephyrhills, where its other operation is located. According to Madison County Commissioner Roy Ellis, "They've been a very good neighbor, and they've kept every promise and they've filled every job they said they'd fill." (SOURCE: Florida Trend Magazine, Feb. 2006.)

Nestlé Waters produces a product that is healthy and calorie free. Every year, more and more people are choosing our products as an alternative to sodas and other sugary drinks. That is an increasingly important consideration as obesity has become a serious health crisis in America.