

Top 10: Localize Water!

Eighty-seven percent of Americans receive their water from public utilities, which are first and foremost accountable to consumers. Like the air we breathe, we have an essential right to safe, affordable water – a right that should never be subject to interference by private corporations. People are best served when water service is controlled by the people. Here are 10 reasons why.

Lower Rates

From Pennsylvania to California, public utilities charge up to four times less than some private water companies.

Voter Power

If your local water system is operating poorly, you can elect new public officials to oversee it. Citizens, however, cannot vote incompetent or corrupt corporate CEOs out of their jobs.

Local Money Stays Local

Rates paid to public utilities are pumped back into the system – for maintenance, repairs and upgrades. Private companies, however, can spend your money virtually any way they wish—rewarding distant shareholders, lining CEOs’ pockets, or investing in other businesses.

Serving the Poor

Public agencies carry a moral responsibility to provide water to everyone. Private companies don’t. In Pennsylvania, thousands of people unable to pay their bill lost their water in 2005 – thanks to a new industry-backed law making it easier for companies to terminate service.

Better for the Environment

Publicly controlled systems are more likely to implement conservation and efficiency programs than private companies. And public systems aren’t exposed to profit-driven pressures to develop new water sources, which can deplete aquifers and damage ecosystems.

More Accountable Customer Service

Because the people who work for publicly owned utilities work for you, they are more likely to respond quickly and efficiently to your problems and concerns.

Transparent Decision-Making

Public utilities are required to maintain open meetings and open records. Corporate executives, however, are free to meet in private and keep all but federally required financial reports secret.

Affordable Financing

Government agencies qualify for low-interest, tax-free bonds to pay for system improvements that private corporations cannot receive. This keeps costs – and rates – down.

More Control Over Rates

Communities that own their water systems control their rates. Private companies boost their rates through a regulatory process in which most people lack access.

People Before Profits

Unlike private corporations, publicly owned water systems need not turn a profit, so they can focus exclusively on delivering safe, clean water – instead of the bottom line.



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