

Water report raises questions at TMWA

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[Victoria Campbell, News 4](#)

The Truckee Meadows Water Authority is firing back at a national non-profit organization that ranked Reno's tap water near the bottom of 100 American cities because of arsenic and other chemicals in the water. The Environmental Working Group (EWG) says the three-year study should motivate residents to campaign for cleaner water and stricter state and federal standards.

"I wasn't aware of EWG prior to two days ago," said Paul Miller, water quality

manager for TMWA. "We've never worked with EWG on any issue regarding water quality.

"The water TMWA provides is safe."

Miller says TMWA routinely works with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Nevada Dept. of Environmental Protection, the Nevada Division of Health, and local district health departments to continuously test the water supply that comes mainly from Lake Tahoe and area reservoirs. TMWA performs 10,000 such tests per year, Miller says.

EWP is recommending that residents buy water filters--and sells such filters on its Web site for a share of the profits. Some are priced at just under \$950.

And at least one water expert says filters are a bad idea.

"That's removing important ions, calcium for your bones, fluoride for your teeth," said Jim Thomas, Ph.D., a hydrologist with the Desert Research Institute. "These are minerals and trace elements that your body needs."

Thomas calls Reno's water quality "incredible", and says residents are fortunate to have clean, safe drinking water. He points out that various independent agencies have joined TMWA in monitoring its quality for years. The Desert Research Institute and the US Geological Survey are just two such agencies, he says.

As for EWG's report, Thomas says he agrees with the result's findings that show some levels of chemicals in the water, but doesn't agree with EWG's interpretations of the findings as inherently harmful to the population.

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