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Plastic Pollution Coalition Files False Advertising Lawsuit Against Danone Waters of America for Representing evian Bottled Water as “Natural” and “Sustainable”

Popular brands of bottled water are marketed to D.C. consumers as natural, sustainable, and environmentally friendly—despite contributing to plastic pollution and containing health-harming microplastics and other unnatural substances.

Washington, D.C. — Plastic Pollution Coalition filed a lawsuit in the District of Columbia Superior Court today against Danone Waters of America, LLC, maker of evian bottled water headquartered in the United States, for false and deceptive marketing in violation of the District of Columbia’s Consumer Protection Procedures Act (CPPA). Danone Waters of America promotes evian as “sustainable,” “natural,” and “healthy,” despite these products containing health-harming microplastics and plastic chemical bisphenol-A (BPA), and creating plastic pollution.

An independent laboratory evaluation revealed both microplastics and bisphenol-A (BPA) in evian “natural” bottled water products—and microplastics and BPA are far from natural or healthy. Over the past several years, scientists have detected the presence of tiny plastic particles throughout the human body, and have found their presence linked to fertility issues, heart attack, neurodegenerative disorders, stroke, other serious health problems, and even death. BPA and other bisphenol, which are added to plastics to increase their rigidity, are known to disrupt the human endocrine (hormone) systems, and have been identified as among the most concerning of the more than 16,000 chemicals that are added to plastics.

In addition to touting the “natural” qualities of its water on its consumer-facing website for evian, Danone Waters of America pledges that the brand is “committed to preserving [the environment] through long-lasting sustainability initiatives.” While the corporation boasts that it has “a history of sustainability,” its production of plastic bottled water is inherently unsustainable—and Plastic Pollution Coalition believes that it has not made any significant effort to address the plastic pollution it produces.
Instead, as alleged in Plastic Pollution Coalition’s lawsuit, Danone Waters of America perpetuates misleading industry narratives around plastic recycling by advertising its evian products as “100% recyclable” and including “Made from 100% Recycled Plastic” on product packaging. However, plastic is not designed to be recycled, and most plastic items, including plastic bottles, that are collected for recycling are never actually recycled. Instead, plastics collected for recycling are most often sent to landfills or incinerators, or are shipped overseas, perpetuating plastic production and its resultant plastic pollution, and environmental injustices.

**Julia Cohen, Co-founder and Managing Director of Plastic Pollution Coalition said:** “People in the U.S. and all over the world are increasingly looking for products that are better for the environment and their health. Bottled water companies continue to capitalize on the healthiness of water—despite the significant toxic toll that the plastic bottles they package the water in takes on our planet and our bodies. The claims these companies make about their products being ‘sustainable’ and ‘natural’ are inaccurate and misleading to consumers.”

**Sumona Majumdar, Chief Executive Officer of Earth Island Institute, said:** “We will continue to insist that corporations, like Danone, be honest with consumers about their products, especially when it comes to human and environmental health. There is nothing ‘natural’ about water containing petrochemical products and there is nothing ‘sustainable’ about single-use plastic bottles.”

Danone Waters of America is a subsidiary of French multinational food corporation Danone. According to its evian consumer-facing website, Danone began importing evian Products from France into the United States and Canada in 1978, and the evian brand is now sold in more than 140 countries. In 2023 Danone was the #2 seller in packaged waters worldwide, and its evian bottled water was the corporation’s #2 selling bottled water, after its Aqua brand according to its annual report.

Plastic pollution is an urgent global crisis threatening human and environmental health on a massive scale, from the plastic-producing petrochemical plants that disproportionately impact communities of color and low-income communities to the plastic waste that is often dumped in developing countries to the toxic microplastics invading our bodies, which have been shown to contribute to cancer, neurotoxicity, reproductive issues, endocrine disruption, and genetic problems.
Plastic Pollution Coalition is represented by Richman Law & Policy, which specializes in consumer protection law.

About Plastic Pollution Coalition:

Plastic Pollution Coalition is a non-profit communications and advocacy organization that collaborates with an extensive global alliance of organizations, businesses, and individuals to create a more just, equitable, regenerative world free of plastic pollution and its toxic impacts. Plastic Pollution Coalition is a project of Earth Island Institute.

http://www.plasticpollutioncoalition.org

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About Richman Law & Policy

Richman Law & Policy is the leading law firm representing consumers and nonprofit organizations in legal advocacy challenging deceptive marketing claims regarding the “greenwashing” and “humanewashing” of animal products. Using consumer protection statutes and other legal tools, Richman Law & Policy has successfully brought numerous actions against companies and operations that deceive consumers about their alleged sustainability practices.