INTER-AMERICAN WATER DAY
CELEBRATIONS REPORT 1997

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Division of Health and Environment
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BACKGROUND</td>
<td>i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Activities</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 School and school children</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2 Community level</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3 Media mobilization</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Receptivity of the IAWD</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Recommendations and Suggestions</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Conclusions</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BACKGROUND

In 1992, the Inter-American Association of Sanitary and Environmental Engineers (AIDIS), the Caribbean Water and Wastewater Association (CWWA) together with the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) signed a declaration in Havana, Cuba to celebrate the first Saturday of the month of October as the Inter-American Water Day (IAWD). The vision was that this event would allow governments of the Americas, international agencies, nongovernmental organizations, municipalities, and communities to take advantage of this day to call attention to the problems relating to drinking water supply and the conservation and protection of water resources. The declaration further emphasized that this Day should not be simply observed but rather should be seized as an opportunity for carrying out educational, informational, and other activities aimed at improving the quality of life of the people of the Americas. To this end IAWD has been effective in mobilizing mass segments of the population in activities that foster awareness about the importance of water as one of the key factors for good health and educating them about its proper and efficient use.

The IAWD is a celebration of water as an essential and endangered natural resource and each year an important public health theme is highlighted. The first IAWD was celebrated in 1993, and the theme was "Water is Life and Health". Being that this was the inaugural celebration many countries required assistance in organizing the event, thus the celebration was more of a learning process, in what was required to make the event successful, and interesting to the public. Despite this uncertainty, nineteen countries participated in the celebration. In 1994, the theme was "Water and Your Environment." The focus was on the issues related to drinking water, and the protection of drinking water sources in the Region, particularly freshwater resources. "Water a Heritage to Preserve" was the theme in 1995. It concentrated on the need to manage water resources through effective and integrated approaches that would protect human health and aquatic ecosystems. In 1996, the theme was "Water too valuable to waste." The objective was to focus attention on the need to better manage, protect and conserve water resources, at the individual, community and national levels, with particular emphasis on public participation. By 1996, countries had become proficient enough in organizing the event and twenty-five member countries participated in activities observing the IAWD.

In 1997, the IAWD celebrated its fifth year. The event was well celebrated in the Region and twenty-eight countries, including first time participants Cuba and Montserrat, participated in activities to mark this milestone. Other countries such as St. Vincent and Dominica showed an interest in participating. St. Vincent who has never participated in the IAWD, indicated that a similar event was celebrated during the month of April, since this was the time of the year when the country was likely to experience water shortages, and therefore preferred to keep the subject of water at the forefront during this crucial period. As a result, they were unable to observe the IAWD. They have however, distributed the materials that were sent to them. Dominica who has also never participated in this event indicated that the late arrival of the materials, and other problems prevented their participation this year, however, they hope to participate in 1998. The theme for 1997 was "Drinking Water Quality and Your Health". The focus was on the relationship between the quality of water and the occurrence of diarrheal diseases including cholera.

Since its inauguration in 1993, the IAWD has been well received by member countries, the response has been excellent and the event has grown into a regional success that has involved the participation at the highest echelon of the political structure. National and local observances are organized, and community participation has been the cornerstone of the success of this event.

The IAWD has sensitized the population about the importance of water management and conservation; and more importantly, it has reinforced to the authorities the urgency of addressing the water problems of the population in urban, rural areas and indigenous communities.
I. Introduction

Inadequate and unsafe drinking water supplies represent a continuing public health problem for most of the world's population. In Latin America and the Caribbean many people are using water supplies that are unsafe, and very likely to be threatened by diseases transmitted through drinking water. The high incidence of waterborne diseases which include such classical diarrheal diseases as cholera, typhoid fever, and hepatitis A are evident of the need for microbiologically safe water in the Region. However, availability of safe drinking water and proper sanitation in the region remains limited, despite the fact that in the last decade, the 1991 cholera epidemic was one of the single most dramatic events for Latin America and the Caribbean. The disease, which had been dormant close to 100 years, reappeared in full force killing thousands of people in the Region. If anything positive came out of the epidemic, it would be the realization by regional leaders that only universal access to safe drinking water and proper sanitation could protect their countries from the return of such deadly infectious diseases. As a result of the outbreak in 1991, the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), Governments, International Organizations, Health Officials and other entities collaborated in various efforts to improve the quality of water and sanitation in the Region, with the aim of improving the quality of life of its citizens. To this end, the celebration of Inter-American Water Day (IAWD) through its activities and educational programs have attempted to, and to a great degree have been successful, in raising the awareness of both the population at large and the authorities in charge about the importance of water and health. This year's theme "Drinking Water Quality and Your Health" focused on waterborne diseases, solutions to reduce the occurrence of such diseases, including cholera, and educating the public on the importance of practicing proper hygiene and water protection. Waterborne diseases affect our communities, and young children are the most vulnerable to diarrheal diseases and other diseases resulting from the consumption of contaminated water.

This year's theme was well received by the countries. Most countries indicated that the theme was relevant to the needs of their country. Trinidad and Tobago felt that the theme was appropriate, even though there have been no reported cases of cholera in the country, but due to their close proximity to Venezuela, Guyana and Suriname who have all had cases, they have been living with the threat of the disease since 1991. The theme allowed them to keep the public vigilant about the threat of the disease. Other countries, indicated that the lack of adequate and safe drinking water to the general population, and at risk populations in particular, has resulted in the high incidence of diarrheal disease, and is one of the leading causes of the high morbidity and mortality indexes existing in their countries. Thus, this year's theme, has allowed the organizers of the IAWD to do what public health officials have been unable to do, that is to develop activities including public information campaigns, and go into these communities and educate them about the importance of safe water and health, more importantly, to allow the communities, particularly children to participate in all level of activities.
II. Activities

As stated in the IAWD Declaration, public awareness is one of the basic components for bringing about changes and improvements in water quality. Each year the IAWD activities target the general public, schools and all institutions of the sector. This year most countries celebrated a week of activities. Countries organized environmental educational activities to raise public awareness about the relationship between the quality of water and the occurrence of diarrheal diseases, including cholera.

Although activities vary from country to country over the years certain activities have proven to be very effective in creating awareness among the public about the event. Such activities include billboards, poster, and large signs placed at strategic points throughout the country. Displays have also been set-up in shopping centers, libraries, and malls. The participation of school children continues to be an integral part of the activities organized to celebrate the IAWD. Activities such as drawing, poetry, essay, and painting competitions and contests remain favorite activities among school children.

2.1 Schools and school children

Competitions such as essay writing, poster/drawing, and painting have proven to be successful over the years. This year most schools organized such events. In Trinidad and Tobago 14 high schools participated in competitions. School children were given an option of writing essays, painting posters, composing a calypso or rap song reflecting the theme. The essays and posters were displayed at a local shopping mall, where the winners were awarded cash prizes in each category. The schools attended by first prize winners received a cash award for the purchase of books or supplies for the school. In Peru, students participated in radio competitions at the national level. Service of Potable Water and Supply of Lima (SEDAPAL) developed games, puzzles, and provided stickers and booklets to schools. One hundred and twenty secondary school students from different regions of Costa Rica, participated in a workshop entitled "Water, Life in the 21 Century", which addressed such issues as drinking water and waste disposal in Latin America and the Caribbean. A children's competition "Fantastic Journey through the Marvelous World of Water" was also organized at the national level to motivate kids in grades 4-5 in public and private schools, to participate in poetry, drawing, and narrative competitions. All schools that participated were invited to display their works, and the winning works were placed in the Melico Salazar Theater. Schools in Suriname organized essays and poster competitions. The winning entries were displayed at an exposition and prizes were given to the winners. In Paraguay, school competitions were organized and educational materials were distributed to 12 municipalities that are part of the movement of healthy municipalities. In Venezuela, schools participated through the HIDROANDES program in a series of educational programs and community activities. These activities were developed to raise the consciousness of school children, and the general public about the importance of water in our life. Pilot projects were developed at different grade levels in the schools to encourage new water attitudes and the correct use of water. The projects also emphasized
environmental consciousness. Competitions, water festivals, and water brigades are some of the activities that have been organized in these pilot projects. Approximately ten colleges in Guayaquil, Ecuador participated in drawing and painting competitions. In Uruguay, the subject matter was taken from the press by the teachers, who then planned activities from an environmental education approach. Brazil, who has always organized extensive activities developed many events involving schools and school children. Students were involved in school competitions, expositions, theater workshops, fairs, lectures and exhibitions. Over three hundred students participated in a parade to commemorate the IAWD. They carried placards and banners about the theme. Students also participated in environmental education campaigns aimed at cleaning up rivers and planting of native trees on the river banks in their communities. In Panama, a mural exhibition prepared by students from four colleges and institutions of the sub-sector of water were displayed in the auditorium of the Ministry of Health. Primary school students in Argentina, participated in competitions where selected works were displayed and certificates were given to the participants.

Visits to treatment plants by school children have also been a very popular and effective IAWD activity. In Suriname, two such visits were organized to the new water treatment plant in Lelydorp. In Trinidad and Tobago, an Open Day was organized for schools to visit the Water Works (Caroni Arena/ and Caura), and the Waste Water Treatment Plants in San Fernando, and in Scarborough Tobago. A total of eight hundred students participated in these events. Visits were also organized to local private industries. In addition, open day for the general public to visit Navet and Arena Reservoirs in Trinidad and Hillsborough in Tobago were also organized. In Panama, three technical tours were organized for students to visit water treatment plants, and wastewater treatment plants. The students also visited a bottling water plant. School visits to treatment plants were also organized for students in Brazil and Mexico.

Other activities such as visits by professionals, experts and representatives from different institutions of the sector to reinforce the importance of water in our daily lives have been organized in some schools. These visits have provided the opportunity for informative chats, conferences, and discussions with the students. In Mexico, such visits were organized in 30 of the 32 states, comprising some 296 schools and reaching 35,673 students.

The participation of schools and school children in the IAWD activities has been very important, in that schools are viewed as a vehicle of change in order to increase public interest about the importance of water, and the need to improve the quality of the water we use. The primary schools are especially important, in that they mold the perceptions and attitudes of the youth.

2.2 Community level

Seminars, workshops and round table discussions have been very popular and successful activities at the community level. In Cuba, the National Institute of Water Resources, used the occasion of the 5th celebration of the IAWD, to organize a workshop comprising of experts of
a regional sanitation project. The workshop addressed among other issues the contaminated watersheds of the city of Havana, considered one of the most important of the nation. Discussions were also carried out on potential corrective actions that could be taken to restore the quality of the water of Havana bay. In addition, several conferences focusing on the control and management of water quality in hydrographic sources were organized in various other provinces around the country. In Peru, a round table discussion was organized by CEPIS, PAHO and the Ministry of Health. The discussion titled "Promoting Changes in the Management of Water in Our Municipalities", promoted the need to change the habits and attitudes of the population, in order to obtain safe and efficient water in our communities. In Costa Rica, a round table discussion organized by PAHO and other organizations was well attended and addressed the quality of water in the country. Technical discussions were organized in Haiti, and in Nicaragua 40 seminars and workshops were arranged with over 2,000 participants. In Brazil, several community meetings were organized to sensitize and educate the residents about the relationship between safe water and good health, and their responsibility towards improving the water conditions in their communities; particularly rivers, streams and other sources, thus reducing the risk of potential health problems.

Other IAWD activities at the community level included an inter-agency sports day in Suriname where participants wore T-shirts with the IAWD theme. Students in Brazil also designed and wore T-shirts during the river clean up campaigns in their communities. In Costa Rica, the national lottery issued a special series in commemoration of the IAWD. On the back of each lottery ticket there was a message from the Minister of Health about the importance of water to life and health. There was also an international water fair (Acuamanía) in Costa Rica. Visitors to the fair were given information about the protection of water resources, quality of water, and control of water leakages. The fair also included a song festival. Water fairs were also very popular in the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua.

In Paraguay, a ceremonious function was organized for the commemoration of the IAWD. The event was presided over by the Minister of Public Health and Social well being, also present was the President of the Corporation of Sanitary Works, the Director General of the National Service of Environmental Sanitation and the President of AIDIS Paraguay. In Uruguay, the central activities took place in the office of the Director of Administration and Sanitary Works of the state, with the presence of national authorities, including the Minister of Housing, and the Environment. In Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil there were exhibitions held at the local shopping centers. Brazil also held Expoagua II, an event that has been successful in the past.

In Argentina, due to the close proximity in the dates selected for the IAWD (4 October) and Word Day for the Reduction of Disasters (8 October), an Initiative was passed that would adopt action strategies to jointly celebrate both events and thus create an environmental education program. Argentina decided to carry out a common coordination of the events, with an extensive period of commemorations, from August to December 1997, and a concentrated week
of activities: 3-10 October. The activities were varied and included workshops, courses, and seminars addressing topics relevant to the environment.

2.3 Media mobilization

From its inception in 1993, the media (radio, television, newspapers) have actively participated in the IAWD celebrations. In many countries the media has been an integral part of the planning and organization of the event. They are able to create public awareness about the event, and more importantly, about the issues relating to water. Thus, they have become the link between the public and organizers of the IAWD. All sections of the media are given information packets, and background information to assist them in the preparation of programming such as: news reports, interviews, documentaries and commentaries.

In many countries educational programs were developed and aired on radio and television stations. In Peru, school children participated in radio competitions at the national level, through "The Encyclopedia of the Air". This program tested their knowledge of the importance of water. In Montserrat, there were radio call in programs on water related matters, particularly the impact, if any, of the Soufrière volcano on water quality. There was also a talk show "Talking Health" sponsored by the Ministry of Health. A radio call-in show in Trinidad and Tobago, "It's your Turn," allowed the public to air their views on the water situation, and to talk with experts about the water supply in the country. In Jamaica, various interviews were aired on national radio programs. While in Haiti, private industries for the water sector sponsored several radio spots.

Television programs have been effective in providing the public with a visual outlook of the many uses of water, and the health risks that can be associated with contaminated water sources. For example, in Venezuela, HIDROANDES used children in a video narrative to illustrate the many uses of water, its importance to daily life, and how contamination of this resource could adversely impact our health. In Suriname, the Health Education Unit of B.O.G prepared a video on water, and its impact on health. This video was shown for two weeks on local television stations. In addition, two other videos were shown on ATV and STVs. During and after the IAWD, the Government Information Division of the Prime Minister's Office of Trinidad and Tobago, aired a 15 minute television program on all stations about the water treatment process, the importance of safe water, and the prevention of waterborne diseases. The Minister of Public Utilities, the CEO of the Water Authority and other experts were interviewed for this program. There was also a television call-in program where experts discussed the quality of water in Trinidad and Tobago, the public was invited to ask questions to the panel of experts. In Brazil there were various television and radio interviews on water issues, particularly the conditions of the rivers and waterways during the IAWD.

Newspaper coverage in most countries have been very good at both the local and national levels. There were many articles, advertisements, special reports, interviews, and special supplemental editions in the papers. Many newspapers utilized the information provided in the
IAWD kits and reprinted them. In addition, articles were contributed by state and local officials, members of institutions relating to the sector, and engineers. In Honduras, the Collaborative Group in Water and sanitation, wrote several articles about a new project which is the construction of drinking water systems in the country, they also wrote about the importance of the IAWD. In Uruguay, there were articles in the Busqueda, El País, and El Observador. Several articles on waterborne diseases/water disinfection were written in Suriname, including those by the water authority, and a university professor. In Haiti, many articles were written in the newspapers. There was great and extensive coverage of the IAWD events in Brazilian newspapers. In Mexico, the poster and materials from the information kit was reproduced by the newspapers. In Bolivia, ANESAPA (National Association of Drinking Water Supplies Agencies) wrote an article on the history and mission of the IAWD in its magazine.

III. Receptivity of the IAWD

Since its inauguration in 1993 the IAWD has been well received and supported by the general public, governments, NGOs, and entities involved in the sector. Each year this event is more recognized, and a greater number of sectors are incorporated in the activities celebrating this event. In the 1997 IAWD survey, some countries reported an increase participation from the private sector. Trinidad and Tobago indicated that the involvement of the private sector, was encouraging, since this was the first year that the event has had such wide participation the private sector. Panama, stated that compared to previous years the participation of the private sector in the IAWD activities has greatly improved. In Paraguay, there was not only a significant increase in the participation of the private sector, but international agencies such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the World Bank, United Nations Children Educational Fund, and the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation among others actively participated in the event. Other countries such as Costa Rica, reported that the private sector and NGOs have always and continues to actively participate in this event. CEPIS states that in Peru, over the years the event has evolved into an important celebration, and as such has created concrete and permanent activities, especially at the level of local governments. Nicaragua stated that they have always had intense participation from the private sector, NGOs and with institutions of the states. The survey also indicated that the participation of the national authorities in the IAWD activities continues to be supportive. Government officials actively participated in opening ceremonies, and attended and participated in seminars and workshops. Representatives from various ministries made themselves available for interviews and television and radio call-in programs where they were able to address the issues and concerns of the citizens. The positive and enthusiastic support towards the IAWD by the general public, and private and public sector has allowed for the sustainability of this event.

IV. Recommendations and Suggestions

Five years after its inauguration, the IAWD has been able to work out most of its initial problems. In previous years countries have recommended that local programs needed to be
broadened, and there needed to be more involvement in the rural communities. Today, there have been equal emphasis at both the local and national levels, and many countries have been able to implement IAWD activities in rural and indigenous communities. And as indicated earlier some countries have seen an increase participation by the private sector, NGO’s and others involved in the sector. However, other problems are inherent in the preparation of such an event. Countries continue to recommend:

- materials should be printed in all the official languages including french and Portuguese;
- countries should be informed of the theme months in advance;
- materials should be sent to countries earlier;
- inclusion of materials for pre-schoolers;
- greater regional help; and
- greater cooperation from professional organizations.

V. Conclusions

The IAWD provides a great opportunity each year to emphasize the importance of water to human health and well being. The fifth celebration of the event has proven once again to be successful, and has maintained its objectives as stated in its Declaration which are; to increase public awareness about the issues relating to drinking water, and the protection of water resources; and to encourage governments and other involved in the sector to participate in the observance of this event. The IAWD continues to mobilize large masses of the population, through activities that educate them about the importance of water, and the need to conserve, protect, preserve, this resource. It has also been a good mechanism for mobilizing the sector. This year the event has conveyed the importance of safe water more importantly, the IAWD continues to foster new attitudes and behavior in children about water and the importance protecting this resource. The school represents the most suitable place to assimilate the important issues relating to water. The IAWD has the potential to in time, incorporate the subject matter into school programs.

However, despite the overall success of the IAWD, there is the need for continued collaboration from the private sector, national authorities and other entities involved in the sector, to participate in the organization of this event. As was evident in countries like Trinidad and Tobago and the Dominican Republic the active participation from the private sector allowed for a broader scope of activities. Like wise, greater participation by international agencies in Paraguay permitted organizers to broaden the scope of activities. Such collaboration would limit
the financial constraints placed on any one group or organization. The signers of the IAWD Declaration envisioned that it was only through such cooperation that a greater portion of the population could be reached.
# Activities Organized to Celebrate the IAWD

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Argentina</td>
<td>Environmental education program that included workshops, courses and seminars, and competitions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>Competitions, exhibitions. Environmental education campaigns to clean-up community (rivers); visits to treatment plants, parades, fairs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cuba</td>
<td>Workshop, conferences and seminar.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Costa Rica</td>
<td>School competitions (drawing, poetry and narrative); round table discussions; seminars; workshop; international water fair.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dominican Republic</td>
<td>Water fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecuador</td>
<td>Drawing and painting competitions in ten colleges.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>Technical discussions, seminars, school visits.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Honduras</td>
<td>Articles in newspapers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mexico</td>
<td>School and community talks; visits to treatment plants; school competitions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Montserrat</td>
<td>Radio and television programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nicaragua</td>
<td>Water fair, seminars and workshops.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Panama</td>
<td>Mural exhibitions by students and institutions of the sector; visits to water treatment plants, and waste treatment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paraguay</td>
<td>School and community competitions; seminars, workshops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peru</td>
<td>School competitions, (games, puzzles and booklets); round table discussion. Radio competition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Suriname</td>
<td>Visits to treatment plants, television programs, school essay/poster competition.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trinidad</td>
<td>School competitions (essay, poster, calypso/rap song); shopping mall exhibitions; visits to water works, and waste water treatment plants; visits to private enterprises; radio and television call-in programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uruguay</td>
<td>School environmental education programs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>Environmental health programs, competitions.</td>
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ANNEX

Winning IAWD Essays from School Children in Trinidad and Tobago.
Why is Clean Water Important to Keep Me Strong and Healthy?

By Felisha Lou-ann Garcia (11-13 years)

Clean water is important to keep me strong and healthy because it replenishes my body fluids when I use up energy, so that I do not become dehydrated. It provides my body with various minerals. If the water is contaminated and I drink it I could get very sick, or if the water is highly contaminated I can die.

Water is essential to life and without it we are unable to survive. Any water that is to be used for drinking must be free from disease organisms and impurities. Highly polluted water can contain poisonous substances which can be dangerous to our health.

Water has many uses in the maintenance of good health. We need water for cooking, bathing, washing, cleaning and drinking. Clean water should always enter the human body, because it is an important part of all cells and body fluids.

Nearly all water needs to be purified before being used for drinking because some may contain bacteria; the most perilous of suspended impurities. Some bacteria cause diseases like typhoid, cholera and dysentery.

Rain water is fairly clean, containing few impurities. However, impurities cannot be seen until water is examined in the laboratory using a powerful microscope. A sample of water may look clear, be free from unpleasant taste or smell, and yet contain bacteria and organic matter on which they feed.

So we have to be very careful when we drink water. We must not let the looks fool us. Water can be made safe for drinking. Large quantities of water, which come from pipes from drinking and for household purposes are treated with a substance that kills bacteria.

If we want a good supply of water in our homes, we must often rely on tap water or water brought to our homes by trucks. Water which is kept in barrels and tanks should be well covered at all times, because it can be contaminated easily ;if not secured safely and properly.

We must always bear in mind that water is a basic necessity ;and it must always be clean before we drink it. That is why human beings should be very careful before drinking water, because some water may fool you.

Do you have confidence in me for telling you why clean water is important for our health?
"What Must be Done in Trinidad and Tobago to Ensure Clean Drinking Water Is Available to All Communities"

By Neela Ramsundar (14-16 years)

It is amazing how swiftly one’s emotion can change from surprise to contempt to utter disgust when after an exhausting cricket match in the savannah, a person opens the nearby standpipe only to find red brown, stomach-wrenching mud water pouring out. Such is the situation many of the people in our communities have to endure. Therefore, to meet the urgent demand of optimum consumer satisfaction, much needs to be done by the Water and Sewage Authority and other responsible bodies to ensure clean drinking water is available to all communities in Trinidad and Tobago all the time.

One of the most well known problem with the water service involves the replacement and installation of malfunctioning or obsolete equipment in the treatment plants. This aspect is of utmost significance when it come to providing purified drinking water to the wider society. Moreover, the replacement of rotted and broken water pipelines are also essential since it would reduce the possibility of contamination by hydra, worms, cockroaches, nematodes and other harmful bacteria into our water system.

There should be routine and efficient water testing by qualified personnel in all our reservoirs, so as to detect toxic substances such as lead and pesticides which may leak into the dams and poison our water supply.

I believe an operable plan should be put in place in case water is turned off in areas. The society should be warned before-hand in cases of emergency or shortage and a team of well equipped, sanitary water trucks deployed to the affected communities.

It would also be an advantage to all communities to have conveniently located standpipes where people do not have to worry about dirty running water caused by faulty pipelines.

In many ways, it is of fundamental importance to have a good relationship and mutual understanding amongst managers and their subordinates, since surely this may help to prevent or alleviate undesired actions taken by employees. Take for example the recent strike by W.A.S.A. workers. This strike hampered the smooth distribution of clean drinking water. In addition, good human relationships between W.A.S.A. and their customers are highly recommended. Here, information is passed on as to whether there is a maximization of consumer satisfaction, and suggestions can be given as to ways of improving it.

Lastly, it should be noted that the lawless deforestation of hillsides and mountains of our picturesque islands are indeed taking a toll on the provision of a clean supply of water. This is so because heavy rainfall causes the bare hillsides to erode and vast amounts of sand, silt and debris are washed down into our waterways. If the laws are upheld, then our natural forest
reserved will not be indiscriminately destroyed. We need our rain forests which help to keep our run-off water carefully stored away in the soil. When this source of our water supply feed streams and rivers on a controlled basis, trickling in rather than gushing down, a clean water supply results. The responsible bodies should take measures to make the public aware of the present situation through the use of the media.

A wise man once said that psychology is biology, that biology is really chemistry and that chemistry is really physics. I am convinced that not having clean, purified drinking water can affect a person psychologically, biologically, chemically as well as physically. Keeping all these points in mind, the authoritative bodies should act now to remedy our faulty water supply system to ensure that the people of this beautiful twin islands of Trinidad and Tobago, are provided with clean drinking water for a healthier life and state of mind.
Why Clean Water Is Important to Keep
Me Strong and Healthy?

By Crystal Skeete (10 years)

Clean water is about the most important thing in the world. If there is clean water there
will be no water diseases, no cholera, gastro or typhoid. Clean water is used for making ice,
cooking, drinking and washing dishes. If we don’t get clean drinking water the inner body will
not function as we expect it to.

Drinking water is the most important of water uses. Therefore it has to be clean because
the body is made mainly of liquid. Without clean water the body will be broken and we will
die.

Water is a colorless, tasteless, odorless liquid that is a compound of oxygen and
hydrogen, that has a chemical name H2O. If H2O is not purified we would suffer very much.

We must drink water otherwise dehydration is possible. Water is a great help to our
bodies because it contains helpful substances and minerals. Drinking only soft drinks and juices
would make us ill, because we would not have important minerals, which makes us healthy.
Unpurified water if transported to our houses can carry diseases, which if prevalent, can cause
citizens of Trinidad and Tobago to become ill.

Clean water improves our health. I close by writing that clean water helps us to have
a longer life span.

Water is essential to the body, it keeps you strong and healthy. "Water is a vital
supply".