



OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE SERVICES
UVM.EDU/POLICIES

POLICY

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Title: Packaged Drinking Water

Policy Statement

The University of Vermont is committed to creating accessible and sustainable sources of water on campus. Unless an exception as outlined in this policy applies, the use of any university funds for the purchase or sale of plain, flat, unflavored, unenhanced, unadulterated, packaged water, including water coolers, is not permitted.

Applicability of the Policy

This Policy applies to all university community members, including, without limitation, faculty, staff, students, contractors, consultants, temporary employees, and affiliates of the University.

Definitions

- Bottle filler:** A device on a fountain or tap that allows individuals to easily fill their personal beverage containers.
- Fountains:** Drinking water fountains connected with tap water inside UVM buildings.
- Movable fountains:** Multi-tap appliances that can be connected with a drinking water quality hose to allow individuals to serve or be served water at large events indoors or outdoors.
- Packaged drinking water:** Purchased drinking water provided in a plastic bottle, a metal can, a paper box lined with metal and/or plastic film, or other packaging material.
- Water cooler and water bubbler:** Machines that supply purchased drinking water. Water filters and dispensers that are filled using tap water or connected to a tap are not included in this definition.

Procedures

Responsible Units

Operational responsibilities lie primarily with the Office of Sustainability, who set the policy and review requests for exceptions for purchasing packaged water.

University employees who approve purchases (including PurCard purchases), should be mindful of this policy.

Packaged Water Alternatives

The university makes reusable bottles available for purchase at the UVM Bookstore, bottle filling stations and fountains are widely available on campus. Departments and groups holding events on campus may, at their own cost and effort, hire a vendor to rent a movable fountain for events.

If renting a movable fountain for an event, departments must notify the scheduling office that is providing event support (University Event Services or Davis Center Events & Ops).

All new buildings on campus will include water fountains with bottle filling stations on every floor. Bottle filling stations will be designed in compliance with [Facilities Design Standards](#).

Exceptions

This rule does not apply to faculty and staff travel, when packaged water may be purchased using a UVM departmental budget.

If an explicit need is identified involving bottled water for the public, the situations will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. Departments that do not have access to drinking water may be granted exceptions while they await installation of the necessary plumbing.

When considering granting an exception, alternatives such as movable fountains or reusable bottles will be considered first.

To request an exemption, individuals and departments seeking to allow provision of water coolers and packaged drinking water must email the [Office of Sustainability](#) no later than two weeks prior to the related event. Water coolers will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis to review the potential for the installation of nearby bottle filling stations.

Emergency Situations

In emergency situations, the Risk Management Department will decide the need for and define distribution methods for packaged water.

Contacts

Questions concerning the daily operational interpretation of this UOP should be directed to the following:	
Title(s)/Department(s):	Contact Information:
Office of Sustainability	sustainability@uvm.edu
Purchasing Services	purchasing@uvm.edu
Risk Management	risk.management@uvm.edu
Disbursement Center	disburse@uvm.edu

Related Documents/Policies

- [Business Meal, Hospitality and Amenity Policy](#)

Training/Education

This policy is included in the purchasing card training and in onboarding documents for new staff.

Additional training will be provided on an as-needed basis as determined by the Approval Authority or the Responsible Official.

About This Policy

Responsible Official:	Vice President for Finance & Administration	Approval Authority:	Vice President for Finance & Administration
Policy Number:	4.40.1	Effective Date:	December 11, 2024
Revision History:	None		