

## Feature of the Month

# Water systems from Varsity Plumbing protect health of buildings and residents

Bobby Bellini


**Varsity  
Plumbing  
and Heating**

As a New York City licensed master plumber, my clients often ask whether or not New York City's drinking water is safe. The truth is that contaminants can get into our building's water supply—the same water that we drink, we bathe with, we shower with and we prepare our foods and vegetables with. While New York heralds its "world-renowned" drinking water, delivering a billion gallons a day from pristine upstate reservoirs to the taps of nine million customers, a lot can happen in the 100 or so miles it takes to get that water to your faucet. Many New Yorkers have experienced water problems from bad odor to poor taste to discoloration to hardness that have led them to take action.

In our 50 years in business, Varsity Plumbing and Heating, Inc. has focused on the health and safety of our clients, repairing leaks, ensuring the safety of pipes and heat systems, and addressing issues of safe and healthy water. With dozens of fully-stocked trucks on the roads, covering the entire New York Metropolitan area, our licensed staff can be on site with the right materials as soon as they are needed. Recently, Varsity Plumbing partnered with Easy Water to bring our customers even more high quality water delivered to individual units as well as the entire building, regardless of size. Our fully installed and warranted under-the-counter Reverse Osmosis filtration system provides unit owners with pure, great-tasting drinking water right from their own tap. Our building-wide filtration systems

ensure that all the water coming into every apartment is safe for cooking, drinking, bathing and washing. And our electronic pipe descaling system provides a salt-free method of reducing the damaging effects of hard water on your building's pipes, protecting the entire plumbing and heating system without the health risks and ongoing expense of adding salt to your water supply.

Many of you have begun or completed compliance with the city's Backflow Prevention campaign, which is designed to prevent any hazardous materials from flowing into the drinking water supply. But what is protecting the water supply within your building? Many property managers have received complaints of dirty water, bad tasting water, and mineral-laden "hard" water from boards and residents, problems that can affect the health and safety of residents, as well as the efficiency and life expectancy of building systems. All of these problems can be addressed with under-the-sink filtration systems, building-wide filtration systems, pipe de-scaling systems, or all three.

#### **Bottled Water: Environmental and Financial Cost**

While many people have turned to bottled water as a solution, in some ways it is also part of the problem. Plastic water bottles have become a major environmental concern in this country. Americans buy more than 30 billion bottles of water each year; of those, about two million tons end up in landfills. The oil needed to produce all those bottles is enough to keep a million cars on the road for an entire year. On top of that, the water inside those bottles is often nothing more than filtered tap water or chemically treated spring water, neither of which is necessarily good for your health. The bottled water industry is loosely regulated, with no guarantee of wa-



Shown is Bob Bellini (center) with sons Rick (left) and Bobby (right) celebrating Varsity Plumbing's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary at Citi Field. Bob founded the company in 1962. Today, Bobby is president, while Rick and their brother Tom are both vice presidents.

ter quality. In a four-year study, the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) found that nearly a quarter of the water tested contained contaminants exceeding state health limits, some of which leaches in from the plastic bottles themselves.

Plus, buying bottled water is expensive. New York City officials estimate that New Yorkers can spend up to \$1,400 per year by drinking bottled water instead of tap water. For a fraction of that, you could install an under-the-sink reverse osmosis system that will provide you and your family with safe, filtered drinking water every day.

#### **Filtration Systems Protect People and Property**

The EPA has identified approx-

imately 84,000 contaminants, but requires municipalities to test and treat drinking water for the presence of only a small fraction of those. Often "legal" levels of toxins are higher than those considered "safe." With the right filtration system, you can remove contaminants and restore beneficial minerals, resulting in safe, great-tasting drinking water.

Many people routinely use pitcher style or faucet-mounted filters to "purify" their drinking water. But these types of filters remove only some of the potential toxins in your water, such as chlorine and fluoride. A Reverse Osmosis system such as the Easy Water Revitalize system, removes or reduces most contaminants, while restoring beneficial minerals to your drinking water.

Varsity's licensed, trained technicians can easily install a Rivitalife filtration system under the kitchen sink, providing unit owners with a lifetime of pure, healthy water. And the work is completely warranted.

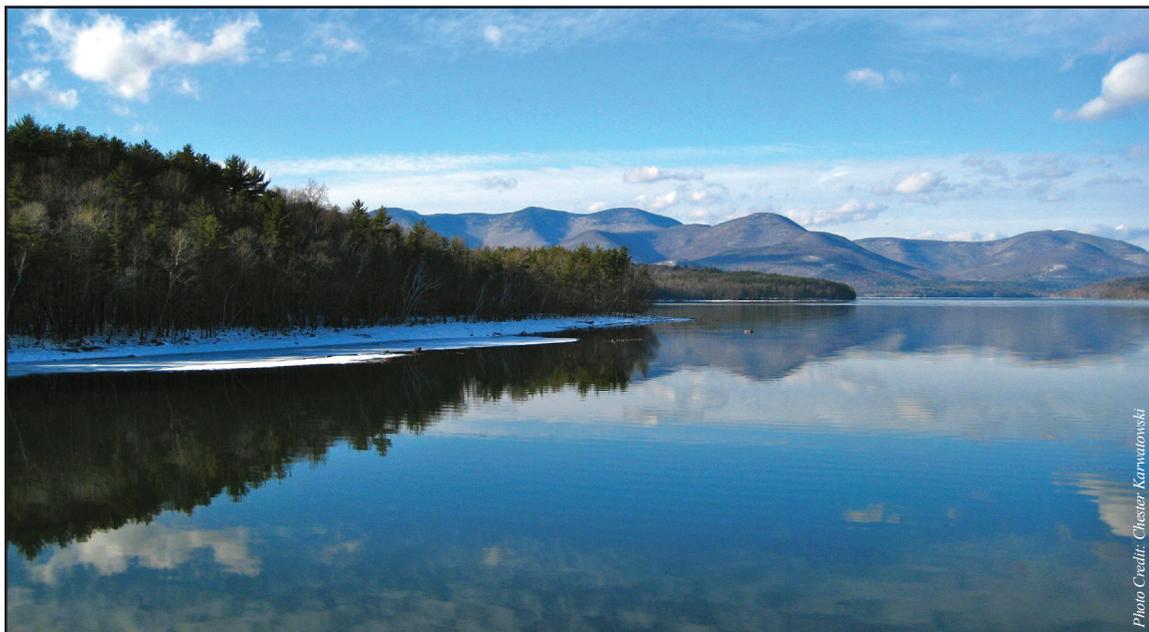
When it comes to the building as a whole, lime, calcium and magnesium in the water can build up inside pipes, heaters and boilers, and reduce efficiency by up to 35%. An electronic de-scaling system installed in the building sends electronic frequencies through the pipes, physically changing the minerals that form scale into a state that resists adhering to surfaces. Over time, existing scale is removed, while new scale build-up is prevented. These de-scaling systems are unlike salt conditioners in several ways: the salt in salt systems needs ongoing replenishment, which can cost up to \$4,000 per year. In addition, high doses of sodium, absorbed through

drinking or washing, can be a health hazard, especially for those with high blood pressure. These descaling systems pay themselves back through the savings on salt alone in just a few years, and then provide ongoing annual savings by increasing the life and efficiency of your building's entire plumbing and heating system.

Building-wide filtration systems can also be installed to remove contaminants from the entire water supply in multifamily buildings. While 20% of personal water usage is for drinking, most is used for showering and bathing, and washing food, clothes and dishes. Toxins and disinfecting agents such as chlorine can be absorbed through the skin, inhalation or by eating foods washed or cooked in untreated water, and can pose health risks. Building-wide filtration systems ensure that all the water you use is safe, and eliminates problems of discolored or bad-smelling water.

According to the EPA, the average American family of four uses close to 300 gallons of water inside the home every day. Protect your family, your clients and your properties from dangerous toxins and contaminants by getting the right water filtration and treatment systems in all your buildings. For more information or to view videos on healthy water and water safety, visit [VarsityPlumbing.com](http://VarsityPlumbing.com) or [bit.ly/S4ZkTe](http://bit.ly/S4ZkTe) or [bit.ly/Rwr83T](http://bit.ly/Rwr83T).

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New York City's water flows from a series of pristine reservoirs, like the Ashokan Reservoir in the Catskills, at the rate of a billion gallons a day, traveling 100 miles or more to reach your tap.

Photo Credit: Chester Karwatowski