

ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, lead is such a highly toxic element that there is absolutely no safe level of lead intake for adults and for children; and

WHEREAS, despite this, the City of Chicago still has about 400,000 lead water service lines, the most of any U.S. city; and

WHEREAS, the lead water service lines are disproportionately located in the City's Black and Latino communities; and

WHEREAS, water tests over five years show that the areas with the biggest percentages of high lead also tend to be working-class neighborhoods with large Black or Latino populations; and

WHEREAS, nine of the top 10 zip codes with the greatest percentages of lead are majority Black and Latino neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, a 2024 study showed that an estimated 68% of children younger than 6 in Chicago are exposed to lead-contaminated drinking water, with disproportionate impacts on predominantly Black and Hispanic blocks; and

WHEREAS, due to this disproportionate presence, Black and Latino communities need to purchase bottled water, and thus are inequitably exposed to the City's involuntary tax on drinking water sold in bottles; and

WHEREAS, families with children, in particular, are forced to buy bottled water to protect their children from the indisputable dangers of lead water; now, therefore

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. Section 3-43-030 of the Municipal Code of Chicago is hereby amended by inserting the language underscored, as follows:

3-43-030 Tax imposed.

A tax is hereby imposed on the privilege of purchasing or using, in the City, bottled water purchased in a sale at retail. This tax shall be paid by the purchaser, and nothing in this chapter shall be construed to impose a tax on the occupation of retail or wholesale bottled water dealer. The tax shall be levied at the rate of \$0.05 per bottle. The tax rate established under this section may only be increased by an ordinance approved by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members of City Council entitled by law to be elected.

SECTION 2. This ordinance takes effect upon passage and publication.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gilbert Villegas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

GILBERT VILLEGAS
Alderman, 36th Ward