

CASE DELL'ACQUA IN ITALY

PUBLIC WATER SOURCES FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The *Casa dell'Acqua* are a public service of quality drinking water, through kiosks equipped with filtration and supply systems. Their function is to replace the consumption of bottled water with the water provided by the city aqueduct, generating great benefits to the environment. The water supplied at the kiosks is natural or carbonated and refrigerated.

In Italy, the first *Water Houses* were implemented about twenty years ago on the initiative of municipal administrations and their great success led to their multiplication throughout the country, in cities and towns, reaching more than 2000 functioning kiosks by 2020. The water stations are located in the public spaces more visited by citizens, students, employees, workers and tourists, who can easily use the service, filling the bottles they bring with them.

This public service revitalizes the long tradition of small drinking water fountains placed in the streets and squares of all historical cities. In Italy the consumption of bottled water is among the highest in Europe and with this initiative the municipal administrations relaunch the offer of water from the city aqueduct, providing a modern service as an alternative to the consumption of mineral water mainly chosen by citizens because it is carbonated or highly branded.

By creating the *Water Houses*, the municipal administrations affirm their commitment to a more sustainable development by emphasizing the value of water as a common good through a direct service that generates cost savings for consumer citizens and benefits the environment by reducing the use of plastic bottles.

The municipal administrations implement the *Water Houses* within the framework of their management policies for the public service of water supply. They function with water from the public aqueduct and with quality characteristics that comply with legal requirements. From the operational point of view, they are installed and managed by the public agencies in charge of the water supply service. These agencies generally use devices to improve some of the organoleptic characteristics that mostly satisfy the end consumers, in particular carbonation and cooling, accompanied by filtering and disinfection processes, with the aim of guaranteeing the functionality of the systems over time and improving their use. In all cases the management agencies ensure the



installation, management, maintenance and quality control of the water.

In most cases, the *Water Houses* supply water for free because the cost is already included in the taxes that citizens pay for the municipal public water service. In 30% of the cases, a very small payment is due, which is always a considerable saving for the citizen with respect to the cost of bottled water. Solutions foreseeing a small payment may be appropriate in cities and territories that are frequently visited by national or international tourists that contribute by either reducing the cost of the public service, and helping to lower the volume of discarded plastic bottles.

The implementation of the *Water Houses* represents for the municipalities a strategy to reduce the pollution linked to the production, transport and correct disposal of plastic bottles. The water that reaches the kiosks directly from the aqueducts does not walk one meter on the road diminishing air pollution due to the transport of bottles, as well as the heavy truck traffic on the territory and the city's roads and streets.

A report published in 2017 by Utilitalia, a Federation of 470 water utility management agencies, informs on the high impact results obtained by the *Water Houses* on the environment: 9,622 tons less of PET collected for recovery or disposal; 240 million fewer PET bottles produced; 663 tons of CO₂ saved for PET production; 965 tons of CO₂ less for the transport of the bottles (estimating an average of 350 km for the transport). The report is based on data relating to 360,835 cubic meters of drinking water supplied by 989 kiosks they manage in different cities and towns.

The *Water Houses* represent one more occasion for municipal governments to mobilize citizens on the issue of water, a common resource essential to life, and on the themes of major global campaigns to achieve the goals of sustainable development while urgently improving the environment.

To know more

[Information in festivalacqua.org](http://festivalacqua.org)

[Report Utilitalia 2017 \(p.68\)](#)

[Article in unionesarda.it](http://unionesarda.it)

[Article in lanuovasardegna.it](http://lanuovasardegna.it)

[Case dell'Acqua in drinkatering.com](http://drinkatering.com)

[Article in gruppo.acea.it](http://gruppo.acea.it)

[Case dell'Acqua – Gruppo CAP](#)

[Case dell'Acqua in gwsonline.it](http://gwsonline.it)

[Article in wired.it](http://wired.it)

[Case dell'Acqua in acquasi.com](http://acquasi.com)



[Article in ismeamercati.it](http://ismeamercati.it)

[Article in carnetsdeweekends.fr](http://carnetsdeweekends.fr)

[Article in nice.fr/fr](http://nice.fr/fr)

