The information on the label of a bottle of water provides a lot of information for the consumer. It is important that this information is accurate in order to protect the consumer and ensure fair trade.

BSDA represents the industry interests and has worked with the FSA and LACORS to agree guidance for the benefit of consumers, the industry, and the enforcement profession. The main points of this guidance are summarised below.

**WHAT IS BOTTLED WATER?**

There are three different denominations of bottled water:

- **Natural Mineral Water** – comes from a named source, has a consistent mineral composition and is untreated
- **Spring Water** – comes from a named source; may be subject to certain permitted treatments
- **Bottled Drinking Water** – any other packaged water

The regulations that cover them are the Natural Mineral Water, Spring Water and Bottled Drinking Water (England) Regulations 2007 and parallel regulations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Bottled water may have carbon dioxide added to it. Minerals may be added to Bottled Drinking Water (but not Spring Water or Natural Mineral Water).

If organic material, such as sweeteners or flavourings, is added to water, it becomes a soft drink and is not classified as water. This leaflet applies only to drinks classified as water.

**LABELLING OF BOTTLED WATER**

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SALES DESCRIPTION

Natural Mineral Water
The sales description must be one of:
“Natural Mineral Water” referring to a still or non-effervescent product
“Naturally Carbonated Natural Mineral Water” meaning an effervescent Natural Mineral Water whose carbon dioxide content is the same after bottling as it was at source
“Natural Mineral Water Fortified with Gas from the Spring” meaning an effervescent Natural Mineral Water whose carbon dioxide content derives from the same ground water but the carbonation level after bottling is greater than that in the source
“Carbonated Natural Mineral Water” meaning a sparkling Natural Mineral Water which has been carbonated at least in part with carbon dioxide from another origin.

Spring Water
For a Spring Water, the sales description is Spring Water with any reasonable qualifier such as “sparkling” or “carbonated”. It should not include the words “natural” or “mineral” in order to prevent possible confusion with Natural Mineral Water.

Bottled Drinking Water
The following terms may be used in the sales description of a Bottled Drinking Water, with the meanings as described.
Blended – a mix of more than one source
De-ionised – water in which most of the major ions have been removed by de-ionisation
De-mineralised – water which has been subjected to distillation, reverse osmosis or de-ionisation
Purified – water which has been treated to remove pollutants or disinfectants
Re-mineralised – water which is made up to a particular chemical composition
Sparkling – can be used where the product is carbonated
Still – can be used to indicate a non-carbonated product

Prohibited terms
Natural, Mineral and Spring – these words all have specific meanings in the context of the denominations of water to which they apply and should therefore not be used in any other way.
Pure – the Food Standards Agency advises against use of this word on bottled water.
Organic – no water may be called “organic” but the agricultural land in the catchment area may have organic approval.