

# Thirst

Wednesday, September 8th, 2004

PSS 195 Sustainable Development Film Series

*Discussion Guide*



- What are some of the fundamental physiological processes of life that rely on water?
- Why did Enron have plans to supplement its energy brokering business with water brokering?
- After viewing the film do you think the water supply should be privatized in many small towns? What would be some of the advantages of privatization? What would some of the disadvantages be?
- What conflicts of interest might arise if a private corporation takes over a local municipal water supply?
- Why would anyone pay 1000X the going rate for water in a bottle rather than get it from their municipal tap?
- Can people protect themselves against the impacts of privatization by drilling wells on their own property? Is this an option for everyone?
- Do farmers ever pay for irrigation water use in the United States?
- Do you know where most of the municipal water comes from in Burlington?
- Do you know what *Water 2025* is?
- What is the World Bank's view on water privatization?

# Water Facts and Figures

CBC Radio | February 2003

## **1.1 billion**

The estimated number of people worldwide who lack access to clean drinking water.

## **2.4 billion**

The estimated number of people worldwide who lack access to sanitation. Most are in Africa and Asia.

## **2 billion**

The estimated number of people who depend on groundwater worldwide (about one-third of the world's population). Countries around the world face rapidly depleting groundwater resources, including parts of India, China, West Asia, the Arabian Peninsula, the former Soviet Union and the western United States.

## **About 80**

The number of countries that had experienced serious water shortages by the mid 1990s. This makes up about 40 per cent of the world's population.

## **One-third**

The proportion of the global population who live in countries with moderate-to-high water stress. Water stress occurs when water consumption exceeds 10 per cent of renewable freshwater resources.

West Asia faces the severest threat. More than 90 per cent of the population in the region lives under severe water stress.

## **Two-thirds**

The proportion of the global population that is expected to be living in water stressed conditions in less than 25 years.

## **40%**

The increase in global water use expected by 2020.

## **\$30 billion**

The projected cost per year of bringing poor people universal access to water by 2015.

(Source: United Nations Environment Programme, GEO-Global Environment Outlook 3, Past, Present and Future Perspectives)