The average person should drink at least eight 8-ounce glasses of water every day to stay hydrated.

Yet 63 million people in the U.S. have come into contact with unsafe drinking water.¹

Before quenching your thirst, here’s what you need to know about the water filter in your refrigerator.

Fake Filters are Flooding the Online Market

Trusted water filters ensure your water is clean and safe to drink.

Counterfeit water filters are commonly sold online through third-party sites disguised as genuine, certified products. They are hard to spot – even for experts.

To trick consumers, counterfeits:

- Copy branding
- Violate trademarks
- Use misleading and fraudulent labels
- Falsely claim they meet NSF/ANSI standards
AHAM conducted three tests to measure their performance against industry standards.

1. Lead Test
   - Lead is a toxic metal that can be harmful to human health even at low exposure levels.
   - **Claim**: Removes lead from water
   - **Method**: 32 filters were tested at 50%, 100%, 150%, 180% and 200% of their specified lifetime
   - **Standard**: NSF/ANSI 53
   - **Results**:
     - Only 2 filters worked through the full 6 month standard refrigerator lifetime the filter claimed
     - 8 filters failed to remove lead at half their standard refrigerator lifetime
     - All counterfeits failed to perform at twice the standard refrigerator lifetime, which is notable since many consumers do not replace their filters on time

2. Cyst Test
   - Common water-borne microbiological cysts are parasites that can cause mild to severe gastrointestinal disease and illnesses.
   - **Claim**: Reduces the presence of cysts (cryptosporidium parvum oocysts) by 99.95%
   - **Method**: To allow for a margin of error, AHAM’s testing only required a 90% reduction
   - **Standard**: NSF/ANSI 53
   - **Results**:
     - 7 of 8 counterfeit filters tested failed to remove 90% of cysts
     - Findings contradict the labels guaranteeing cyst removal

3. Extraction Test
   - Counterfeit filters may not be manufactured with the same quality food grade materials as trusted filters. Clean water sat in counterfeit filters for 3 periods of 24 hours, and ethanol, octane, arsenic and many other harmful compounds were found in the water when the testing concluded, consistent with chemicals found in cheap plastics.
   - **Claim**: Does not introduce contaminants
   - **Method**: Uncontaminated water was filtered through 46 separate counterfeit filters
   - **Standard**: NSF/ANSI standards 42/53 4.1
   - **Results**:
     - During the extraction test, 10 separate compounds were introduced into clean sample water by counterfeit filters
     - Fraudulent labeling assured consumers that these filters were certified not to leach contaminants into household water above acceptable levels

Counterfeit filters do not meet the standards for safe, clean drinking water. To protect your family’s health, only purchase water filters from a certified refrigerator manufacturer.

Learn more about safe filters and where to find them at FilterItOut.org.

1 https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2017/08/14/63-million-americans-exposed-unsafe-drinking-water/564278001/