

Water should be free at all concerts

Water should be readily available in any space where heat exhaustion occurs to avoid emergencies.

by Ethan Lambert

Imagine you are at a big concert, standing in the packed general admission floor with your friends and hundreds of others. After hours of dancing, you take a break to get some water, but you find out that you have to pay \$3, or more, at the bar for a small serving of water. This feels excessive for something needed to live.

It is important to acknowledge that dehydration and heat exhaustion can be life-threatening. Just last summer, a 23-year-old woman died at a Taylor Swift concert due to heat exhaustion.

With the effects of climate change already taking place, heat-related emergencies will become more commonplace, making accessible, free water at concerts more important. There is no better time than now to have an industry-wide standard of free water at concerts.

University of Minnesota student Diana Fick, 22, said water at concerts should be free.

“Concerts are already expensive, and the extra cost of water can be a burden,” Fick said. “Offering free water stations where people can refill their water bottles would be a more sustainable and customer-friendly approach.”

Fick added that having venues with free water makes the overall concert-going experience more enjoyable.

“Knowing that there is free water available at a venue makes me feel more comfortable and less anxious about my well-being at a concert,” Fick said. “The high cost of attending a concert shouldn’t be exacerbated by the need to pay for water.”

For example, Xcel Energy Center allows reusable water bottles into the venue upon inspection, but if you do not have the foresight to bring your own, you will have to pay for an over-priced bottle of Dasani.

The Armory lists water bottles and beverage containers on their restricted items list, leaving the only option as buying a plastic water bottle at the bar.

Jess Valiarovski, a University biochemistry student, emphasized the importance of staying hydrated at concerts.

“It’s easy to lose a lot of fluid quickly in an event like a concert where it’s highly crowded,” Valiarovski said. “You’re likely drinking alcohol or using other substances, and you’re expending a lot of energy enjoying the concert. Dehydration can quickly become a medical emergency.”



Noah Liebl

Having free water at all concerts would make the concert-going experience a little more enjoyable for everyone.

Lief Johnson, 21, feels conflicted on the issue.

“Honestly I think it’s pretty stupid, but at the same time I also understand if it’s like bottled water they have to recoup the cost of buying the bottles,” Johnson said.

Johnson said paying for water is inconvenient, but it is not an important factor in the concert-going experience for him.

“It would never influence my decision on whether or not to go to a certain venue,” Johnson said.

When going to see a concert on a night out, especially bigger venues like Xcel Energy Center and Target Center, the expenses of transportation, concert tickets and parking already feel like more than enough, and the cost of a plastic water bottle feels like an insult to injury.

If you did not bring your own bottle, your only option for drinking water while enjoying the show is to pay at these big arenas, which feels like an infuriating inconvenience.

Some venues in the Twin Cities, however, are good about having free, accessible water. These include all venues owned and operated by First Avenue, which have free glasses at the bar, or the Varsity Theater and The Fillmore, both of which have water refill stations with cups.

If more venues had free water like they do, everyone would have a better time at concerts.