

[NEWS IN BRIEF: Khon Kaen's Brewery Keeps Singha Afloat](#)

written by กองบรรณาธิการ | November 15, 2011

KHON KAEN - As floodwaters continue to threaten parts of Thailand's capital, the emergency closure of many large water manufacturing sites in the Central region has sparked widespread concern. The Singha Corporation, for one, which estimates a hold of 35% on the domestic water market, has been forced to close four of its seven factories, leaving sites open only in Khon Kaen, Chiang Mai, and Surat Thani.

In recent weeks, demand for potable water has skyrocketed and those who can afford to are hoarding supplies. But the remaining three Singha factories have launched a donation scheme of their own as they try to help to ensure a suitable supply.

"One of our labeling companies sunk, but the Singha CEO told us that if we can't produce water [with Singha labels] for sale then we should produce unlabeled water for donation," said Methee Suthat Na Ayutthaya, the manager of Khon Kaen's Singha brewery. Currently, all 1.5 liter bottles of water manufactured in Singha factories are unlabeled and shipped off as flood relief. Singha has [pledged 100 million baht](#) of free water for flood victims and has distributed water worth nearly 70 million baht to date. This year, however, they have decided to manage their own relief efforts.

"In the past, we donated water to government agencies, but it rarely got through to the people. We have to do it ourselves," Mr. Methee said. "You have to understand that this is how things work in Thailand." Singha is donating free water throughout the Northeast, Ayutthaya, Bangkok and its environs.

In addition to producing bottled water, Singha has also hired over 100 residents of five nearby villages to produce EM balls made partially from the factory's waste bacteria and extra molasses. Some believe that these "effective microorganism" water cleansers reduce odor, pollution, and clogging of floodwater, but [little research](#) has been done to prove their efficacy. Singha has produced 200 tons of EM balls in the past few weeks.

Though Mr. Methee is confident that the supply of bottled water in Thailand should remain sufficient, he is less sure about the supply of beer. Khon Kaen Brewery is the only Singha factory still producing beer, and it is only bottling Leo Beer. Singha Beer, the company's more expensive brand, is currently on hold until December.