

From the desk of

Peter,
 Thank you for
 allowing us to publish
 your comments on
 fluoridation.
 Hope to work with
 you again soon!
 Best,
 -Kerry

Kerry Freek

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Coming in July/August 2009:
*Drinking water in First Nations
 and small communities*

Call 416.444.5842, ext. 114
 to be part of the next issue.
 The deadline is June 17, 2009.

■ ■ ■ Letters

This letter came to CWT in response to a news item posted on our website. After a proposal to remove it from their drinking water, Calgary’s city council has voted in favour of fluoride. Despite the cost—approximately \$600,000 per year, plus another \$5 million to upgrade the fluoride systems at water treatment plants—and the health controversy, the city will keep the substance in public water. The city has held six plebiscites on the fluoride issue since 1989.

FLUORIDE: A WASTE MANAGEMENT ISSUE?

The artificial fluoridation issue will keep appearing on municipal council agendas because neither Canadian water quality guidelines nor provincial standards (where they exist) can legislate a policy fraught with pseudo-science and potential liability. Water fluoridation was never about water quality (but sold as decay prevention). It’s really a waste management policy. Hydrofluosilicic acid (HFSA), the fluoridating compound, is a toxic waste which costs \$7,000 per ton to treat. Sell it to municipalities as magic tooth medicine and it’s no longer classified as a waste, but as a “product.”

The feds don’t have jurisdiction over provincial drinking water quality in Canada. That’s why there are no enforceable national drinking water quality standards. This power is the domain of the provinces. Where enforceable standards exist like Ontario’s *Safe Drinking Water Act* and its Regulations, the province can prosecute for violations of prescribed water quality parameters, except fluoride. Why?

The only regulated action is to report concentrations of fluoridated water above 1.5 milligrams per litre (mg/L) when “artificial fluoridation” is used. When “naturally fluoridated” supplies are used, the reporting mechanism remains, but a soft limit of 2.5 mg/L is permitted. There are no corrective actions for fluoride specified by legislation. It’s strange that fluoride is protected this way when no such limit exists for lead, which is less toxic than fluoride. Why the double standard?

The prudent approach to water quality should be based in solid science and not in economics or the ability of a municipality to pay to remove contaminants. This is artificial fluoridation’s case today as it was with trihalomethane limits in the 80s and 90s.

Research now shows that the previous no-harm concentrations of fluoride are actually causing real harm to other body tissue and systems. Two of these harms are fluorosis and hypothyroidism, now mainstream health issues in Canada.

When the average person connects the dots and understands that swallowing fluoride compounds does not prevent decay, but topical fluoride (brushing, rinses, sealants) does, then they will demand the highest water quality possible from municipal providers. Artificial fluoridation of drinking water is needless infrastructure and cost. Apparently some municipalities get it; Calgary’s just not there yet.

*Peter Van Caulart, Director
 Environmental Training Institute
 Fonthill, Ontario*