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## Public said information needed for informed debate

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Members of the public came Monday out to urge council to start holding information sessions regarding water fluoridation.

Many supported Coun. Angela Vieth's motion to start preparing for the sessions right away so the electorate would be educated in time for the November 2010 election.

"I want to see the science," said Peter Mansell, who hasn't made up his mind about fluoridation but has some concerns.

"I want proof. I don't want to just hear endorsements."

But much of the information surrounding the use of hydrofluorosilicic acid is garnered from unreliable sources, said Harry Hoediono, a Waterloo-based dentist and vice president of the Ontario Dental Association.

Hoediono told councillors his organization was ready to defend fluoridation and the science behind it.

He was also in favour of having a fulsome debate on the issue, but asked councillors to consider requiring only licensed or accredited professionals to be allowed to publicly debate the issue.

"Someone once told me everything you read on the Internet is true," he said, referring to the research methods of his opponents.

"You can give both sides, but you'll have to stand behind both of them. You'll be responsible for what's out there."

But fluoride opponents said they were still waiting to see the science to prove the chemical is safe and effective.

Without that information, Waterloo residents shouldn't be forced to drink fluoride, said resident Jim Gilhuly.

"It's giving people a drug they didn't ask for," he said. At the end of the day, fluoride opponents were disappointed by council's decision.

Robert Fleming of Waterloo Watch, who has spearheaded the campaign against fluoridation, said he still had a lot of questions left after the meeting — ones that council didn't seem willing to debate.

"It seems like the City of Waterloo was quick to sweep the debate out of council chambers," he said.

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