



WATERLOOCHRONICLE <http://www.waterloochronicle.ca/news/article/190101>

Questions raised whether plebiscite vote will be binding

Greg MacDonald, Chronicle Staff

Published on Sep 30, 2009

In January 2008, council agreed to hold a plebiscite on the matter of fluoridated water. Complicating matters, however, is that the province's fluoridation legislation only allows for referendums on the matter in single-tier municipalities, said Bill White, the city's solicitor.



Under that law, neither the region nor the city has the authority to hold a vote on the issue.

The region, which has agreed to hold the vote, will instead have to opt to hold a referendum under the Municipal Elections Act — but that's only binding if 50 per cent of the voters turn up, which is unheard of in a municipal election.

What does that all add up to? Whatever the outcome of the vote, it will likely not be binding, White said.

Adding to the headache is that while the current regional councillors have agreed to be bound by the vote, the timing of the election will mean that they could all be out of a job.

The fluoride question will be going on at the same time as the municipal elections.

"There will be nothing binding new regional councillors to adhere to the vote," White said.

That's where elected officials come in, said Coun. Ian McLean

"There will be public pressure for whoever sits on council to take the result and make it the solution," he said.

WATERLOOCHRONICLE
.CA

<http://www.waterloochronicle.ca/news/article/190101>



© Copyright 2008 Metroland Media Group Ltd. All rights reserved. The reproduction, modification, distribution, transmission or republication of any material from this Metroland West Media Group website is strictly prohibited without the prior written permission of Metroland Media Group Ltd.

