

## Waterloo needs the science

ROBERT FLEMING, GUEST COLUMN

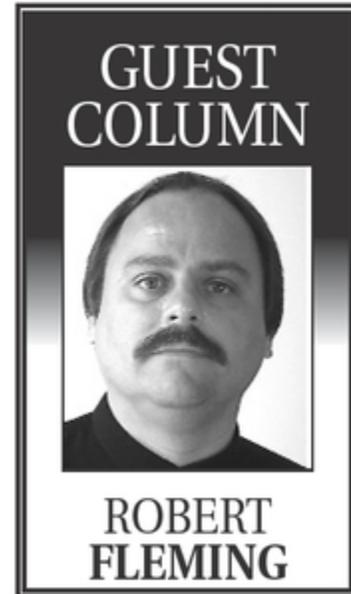
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Dear Dr. Stechey, president, Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario:

This open letter to you, concerns artificial fluoridation of municipal drinking water.

The Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario (RCDSO) is the governing, teaching, licensing, regulatory body for all Ontario dentists.

In 2003, the RCDSO announced it “formally endorses use of fluoridation in municipal drinking water as effective means to prevent dental caries in all age groups.” It also stated, “Where fluoride has been added to municipal water supplies, there has been a marked decrease in tooth decay rates — between 35 per cent and 50 per cent in children, and 30 per cent in adults.” It also stated the U. S. Centers for Disease Control, “estimates that for every dollar (US) spent on fluoridation, \$80 is saved on dental care.”



The RCDSO prefers to cite water fluoridation opinions, endorsements and accreditations, without providing the actual supporting source science. This is observed in your publications, speaking circuits, and recently in the RCDSO presentation to Thunder Bay Council on July 20, 2009, after which council voted to not hold a plebiscite to bring fluoridation to their community.

In 1945, Brantford, Ont. was the first Canadian municipality to adopt artificial water fluoridation. History shows Ontario dentists, licensed and regulated by the RCDSO, supported the arrival of fluoridation. This July, I spent two full days in Brantford, collecting whatever information they had supporting fluoridation, pursuant to a freedom of information request. No supporting records of science existed at the time water fluoridation began in that city. There were, however, the usual opinions, endorsements and accreditations without supporting source science. It is becoming clear that artificial water fluoridation began in Ontario without solid science in hand.

Waterloo's water has been artificially fluoridated since 1966 and we face a November 2010 re-vote on the issue. Our city, region and Public Health have not been able to provide records of source science, under a freedom of information request, to prove artificial water fluoridation was or is safe, effective or cost efficient.

The decision whether or not to fluoridate municipal drinking water is the municipality's responsibility. Voters must have proper access to relevant source science on such an important issue. We need to see the following records:

- Source science proving systemic ingestion/swallowing artificially fluoridated water causes a reduction in dental decay rates.
- Source science proving that systemic ingestion/swallowing of the hydrofluorosilicic acid used to fluoridate — along with its trace co-contaminants arsenic, lead, mercury and radionuclides — is healthy and safe over a lifetime of human ingestion.
- Source science proving all fluorides are the same and that hydrofluorosilicic acid's silicofluoride fully dissociates into free fluoride ions upon contact with water.
- Source science and cost documentation that a dollar spent on water fluoridation saves any dollars on dental care.

Please respond as promptly as you can. After all, it is our water and our health at stake.

Robert J. Fleming is the executive director of WaterlooWatch.

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