

# How



## can we end Fluoridation?

**We can end fluoridation  
through democratic means.**



**Our elected representatives in municipal  
government have authority and responsibility  
for municipal water fluoridation.**

Yet, municipal councils often defer to opinions and endorsements promoting municipal water fluoridation coming from public health, dental associations, and other groups. Such bodies are unelected, and typically remain inaccessible and unaccountable to local citizens, while remaining intimate with municipally elected councils. In essence, such bodies have become pro-fluoridation lobbyists.

**While legal and financial burdens attached to water fluoridation become the responsibility of the municipality choosing to fluoridate, authority to fluoridate people via the local drinking water system remains questionable.**

Municipal councils do have authority to end water fluoridation, by way of passing a motion and then creating a by-law to decommission local fluoridation equipment. Local citizens can offer their council science-based, medical, ethical and individual-right-of-choice reasons supporting an end to water fluoridation. Did you know that only about 1% of all municipally fluoridated water is actually being consumed by people, while the remaining 99% is used for other things. That's a real waste of local fluoridation tax dollars, and an ever accumulative fluoride pollution burden on the environment.

If fluoridated drinking water is now to be supplied by a distributor from outside your currently un-fluoridated community, your community could be deprived of their democratic choice concerning fluoridation. Such an occurrence is discriminatory and must be challenged. Local council may still have the power to order that your community's newly piped-in drinking water remains free of hydrofluorosilicic acid – the chemical most often used to fluoridate municipal drinking water.

Local citizens may want to consider calling for a fluoridation referendum or plebiscite. That is how the City of Waterloo, Ontario ended its ongoing fluoridation in 2010. Specific requirements can vary between provinces/territories and are upheld by the Acts governing local fluoridation and local municipal elections. Having a local fluoridation referendum question placed on the election ballot can be costly for the municipality and local tax payers. Therefore, persuading your council to bring an end to fluoridation directly, is a less costly option for your community to consider.

In order to end fluoridation, local citizens need to connect with and educate your elected municipal representatives. Help them to become comfortable and secure in making a council decision to end fluoridation, even when it might conflict with the policy preference of public health. That is how the City of Calgary, Alberta ended its ongoing fluoridation in 2011.

## Five First Steps

1. Partner with **Canadians Opposed to Fluoridation ~ Canadiens Opposés à la Fluoridation**. Learn why fluoridation is a harmful practice, about the chemicals that are actually being used to fluoridate, and about the strongest arguments for ending fluoridation.
2. Learn who has the power in your community, and what the rules are to follow. Familiarize yourself with your provincial/territorial drinking water and fluoridation Acts. Get to know how municipal council meetings are conducted and what you must do to properly prepare and participate. Research your local municipal referendum process.
3. Form a local community group, or join an existing local group, and develop your position statement calling for an end to fluoridation. Reach a consensus within your working group on how to move forward publically within your community.
4. Write or email your councillors and mayor, copying in any regional or district council members as applicable. Communicate with others on relevant committees. Make sure you indicate that you live locally. Councillors need to know there is local pressure within their own community or ward. Phone and ask to meet briefly to discuss the fluoridation issue, seeking first to understand what they understand, before making any recommendations or suggestions. Build bridges and alliances. Let your councillors know if you or your children have suffered from dental fluorosis due to swallowing too much fluoride from drinking water.
5. Make your letters short, polite and clear. Not more than one page, not more than three points. Use a two-tell, one-ask format. Stick to the issue of ending fluoridation and why. Councillors often receive many letters, and may prefer to read short succinct ones.

Those who exert the most pressure on elected municipal council to continue fluoridating municipal drinking water are typically public health staff whose job it is to promote public health policy. They are often not experts in water fluoridation science, chemicals, dosage, health effects, water treatment concerns, or environmental concerns. Public health holds no authority to order your municipality to fluoridate local drinking water as a public health measure.

Public health says that fluoridation is an urgent need, and typically cites fluoridation's claimed percentage cavity reduction – often neglecting to further explain that this percentage reduction amounts to less than one cavity per person across the population – or sometimes no cavity reduction what-so-ever.

More often, public health is not directly challenged by municipal council because public health comes armed with a federal government recommendation to fluoridate. Still, public health cannot force any community to fluoridate their municipal water supply.

As democratic minded citizens, we can help our elected officials come to better understand where the science falls short, as well as the ethical and legal implications surrounding water fluoridation. It is our right and our obligation to do as much.

***We want to address this important issue, with your help.***



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