

June 01, 2018

Warden Tom Bain and Essex County Council,
360 Fairview Ave West
Essex,
ON.
N8M 1Y6

Dear Warden Bain and Members of Council:

As former Chief Dental Officer of Canada, I wish to express my support for the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit (WECHU) and their desire to have water fluoridation re-introduced in your area in light of their recent Report which outlines changes to the status of oral health since water fluoridation was ceased in 2013.

As you are likely aware, studies show drinking fluoridated water helps reduce tooth decay by 20-40% in people of all ages. Community water fluoridation (CWF) has been identified by the U.S. Center for Disease Control as one of the "10 Great Public Health Achievements of the 20th Century." For more than 70 years, water fluoridation has been extensively studied and researched regarding its safety and effectiveness. There have been more than 18 major reviews of fluoridation since 1997. It was found that fluoridation is safe and there was no conclusive evidence found that it causes cancer, bone disease, kidney disease, birth defects or other adverse health effects, nor does it have a negative environmental impact.

For most cities, every \$1 invested in CWF saves \$38 in dental treatment. The average cost for a community to fluoridate is estimated to range from approximately \$0.50 a year per person to \$3 per person per year.

Water fluoridation has been endorsed by over 90 national and international professional health organizations such as the; Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, Canadian Dental Association, Ontario Dental Hygienists Association, Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion, Canadian Medical Association, Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry, Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, Centers for Disease Control, National Institutes of Health, and World Health Organization, among many other medical, health and other organizations around the world.

There are numerous studies available to you which show the positive impacts of fluoridated water on the population. One reference I would like to specifically draw to your attention is the recent

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government of Canada publication entitled "The State of Community Water Fluoridation Across Canada, 2017 Report".

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/health/publications/healthy-living/community-water-fluoridation-across-canada-2017.html>

This Report is important as it shows that although the number of individuals drinking fluoridated water in Canada decreased from 2007 to 2012, the 2017 numbers show a different picture. These 2017 figures show that the number of individuals in Canada drinking fluoridated water has gone UP from 37.4% in 2012 to 38.7% in 2017 (Table 5). In fact, when they add in those on natural fluoride, it is up to 39.4% (Table 3).

Although you will likely hear that the number of individuals in Canada who are on fluoridated water supplies are diminishing, this is clearly not the case and many now continue to enjoy the benefits of improved oral health through water fluoridation.

Wishing you all the best in your future decisions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a grey rectangular background. The signature appears to read "Peter Cooney" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Peter Cooney,
Faculty of Dentistry, University of Toronto
Retired Chief Dental Officer of Canada.

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