

Most Countries Reject Water Fluoridation

Statements from European and other Health, Water, & Environment Authorities on Water Fluoridation

Austria:

“Toxic fluorides have never been added to the public water supplies in Austria.” (*M. Eisenhut, Head of Water Department, Österreichische Vereinigung für das Gas-und Wasserfach Schuberting 14, A-1015 Wien, Austria, February 17, 2000*).

Belgium:

“This water treatment has never been of use in Belgium and will never be (we hope so) into the future. The main reason for that is the fundamental position of the drinking water sector that it is not its task to deliver medicinal treatment to people. This is the sole responsibility of health services.” (*Chr. Legros, Directeur, Belgaqua, Brussels, Belgium, February 28, 2000*).

China:

Fluoridation is banned: “not allowed”

Naturally high fluoride levels in water are a serious problem in China.

“Bartram said there were many other ‘silent threats,’ including excessive fluoride in the water supply in China, India and the Rift Valley in Africa. In China alone, 30 million people suffer crippling skeletal fluorosis.” (*Jamie Bartram, Coordinator of the WHO's Water, Sanitation and Health Program, March 22, 2002*)

The Chinese government now considers any water supply containing over 1 ppm fluoride a risk for skeletal fluorosis. (*Bo Z, et al. (2003). Distribution and risk assessment of fluoride in drinking water in the West Plain region of Jilin Province, China. Environmental Geochemistry and Health 25: 421-431.*)

In China, the World Health Organization has estimated that 2.7 million people have the crippling form of skeletal fluorosis.

Czech Republic:

“Since 1993, drinking water has not been treated with fluoride in public water supplies throughout the Czech Republic. Although fluoridation of drinking water has not actually been proscribed it is not under consideration because this form of supplementation is considered:

- uneconomical (only 0.54% of water suitable for drinking is used as such; the remainder is employed for hygiene etc. Furthermore, an increasing amount of consumers (particularly children) are using bottled water for drinking (underground water usually with fluor)
- unecological (environmental load by a foreign substance)
- unethical (“forced medication”)
- toxicologically and physiologically debateable (fluoridation represents an untargeted form of supplementation which disregards actual individual intake and requirements and may lead to excessive health-threatening intake in certain population groups; [and] complexation of fluor in water into non biological active forms of fluor.” (*Dr. B. Havlik, Ministerstvo Zdravotnictvi Ceske Republiky, October 14, 1999*).

Denmark:

“We are pleased to inform you that according to the Danish Ministry of Environment and Energy, toxic fluorides have never been added to the public water supplies. Consequently, no Danish city has ever been fluoridated.” (*Klaus Werner, Royal Danish Embassy, Washington DC, December 22, 1999*).

Finland:

“We do not favor or recommend fluoridation of drinking water. There are better ways of providing the fluoride our teeth need.” (*Paavo Poteri, Acting Managing Director, Helsinki Water, Finland, February 7, 2000*).

“Artificial fluoridation of drinking water supplies has been practiced in Finland only in one town, Kuopio, situated in eastern Finland and with a population of about 80,000 people (1.6% of the Finnish population). Fluoridation started in 1959 and finished in 1992 as a result of the resistance of local population. The most usual grounds for the resistance presented in this context were an individual’s right to drinking water without additional chemicals used for the medication of limited population groups. A concept of “force-feeding” was also mentioned.

Drinking water fluoridation is not prohibited in Finland but no municipalities have turned out to be willing to practice it. Water suppliers, naturally, have always been against dosing of fluoride chemicals into water.” (*Leena Hiisvirta, M.Sc., Chief Engineer, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland, January 12, 1996*.)

France:

“Fluoride chemicals are not included in the list [of ‘chemicals for drinking water treatment’]. This is due to ethical as well as medical considerations.” (*Louis Sanchez, Directeur de la Protection de l’Environnement, August 25, 2000*).

Germany:

“Generally, in Germany fluoridation of drinking water is forbidden. The relevant German law allows exceptions to the fluoridation ban on application. The argumentation of the Federal Ministry of Health against a general permission of fluoridation of drinking water is the problematic nature of compul[sory] medication.” (*Gerda Hankel-Khan, Embassy of Federal Republic of Germany, September 16, 1999*).

Hungary:

Stopped fluoridating for technical reasons in the 1960s. However, despite technological advances, Hungary has chosen to remain unfluoridated.

India:

Naturally high levels of fluorides in groundwater have affected at least tens of millions with skeletal fluorosis, often resulting in crippling skeletal fluorosis. The Indian government has been working to *remove* the fluorides from drinking water sources to alleviate this crisis. In India, 17 of its 32 states have been identified as “endemic” areas, with an estimated 66 million people at risk from crippling skeletal fluorosis and 6 million people seriously afflicted.

Israel:

Recently suspended mandatory fluoridation until the issue is reexamined from all aspects: medical, environmental, ethical and legal. “From our experience in Israel and the world when the fluoride issue is studied from all aspects it is rejected.” (*Representative Shimon Tsuk, Israeli Parliament*)

June 21, 2006: The labor, welfare and health Knesset (Israeli Parliament) committee called on the ministry of health to freeze the extension of the fluoridation of drinking water in Israel and to study the issue in depth in order to determine whether to continue with the project or to cancel it completely. Conclusions are to be expected within a year. Until then, municipalities and Mekorot (Israel national water company) are not required to build new fluoride installations.

Committee Chairman MK (Member of Knesset) Moshe Sharoni and MKs Ran Cohen and David Tal claimed during the investigation that the potential damage to public health and environment from fluoridation may be greater than the benefits from decreased dental cavities.

Japan:

Rejected fluoridation: "...may cause health problems...." The 0.8 -1.5 mg regulated level is for calcium-fluoride, not the hazardous waste by-product which is added with artificial fluoridation.

Luxembourg:

"Fluoride has never been added to the public water supplies in Luxembourg. In our views, the drinking water isn't the suitable way for medicinal treatment and that people needing an addition of fluoride can decide by their own to use the most appropriate way, like the intake of fluoride tablets, to cover their [daily] needs." (*Jean-Marie RIES, Head, Water Department, Administration De L'Environnement, May 3, 2000*).

Netherlands:

"From the end of the 1960s until the beginning of the 1970s drinking water in various places in the Netherlands was fluoridated to prevent caries. However, in its judgement of 22 June 1973 in case No. 10683 (Budding and co. versus the City of Amsterdam) the Supreme Court (Hoge Road) ruled there was no legal basis for fluoridation. After that judgement, amendment to the Water Supply Act was prepared to provide a legal basis for fluoridation. During the process it became clear that there was not enough support from Parlement [sic] for this amendment and the proposal was withdrawn." (*Wilfred Reinhold, Legal Advisor, Directorate Drinking Water, Netherlands, January 15, 2000*).

Northern Ireland:

"The water supply in Northern Ireland has never been artificially fluoridated except in 2 small localities where fluoride was added to the water for about 30 years up to last year. Fluoridation ceased at these locations for operational reasons. At this time, there are no plans to commence fluoridation of water supplies in Northern Ireland." (*C.J. Grimes, Department for Regional Development, Belfast, November 6, 2000*).

Norway:

"In Norway we had a rather intense discussion on this subject some 20 years ago, and the conclusion was that drinking water should not be fluoridated." (*Truls Krogh & Toril Hofshagen, Folkehelse Statens institutt for folkeheise (National Institute of Public Health) Oslo, Norway, March 1, 2000*).

Scotland:

In November 2004, after months of consultation, Scotland - which had been unfluoridated - rejected plans to add fluoride to the nation's water.

Sweden:

"Drinking water fluoridation is not allowed in Sweden...New scientific documentation or changes in dental health situation that could alter the conclusions of the Commission have not been shown." (*Gunnar Guzikowski, Chief Government Inspector, Livsmedels Verket -- National Food Administration Drinking Water Division, Sweden, February 28, 2000*).

Switzerland:

In April 9, 2003, the City Parliament of Basel, Switzerland voted 73 to 23 to stop Basel's 41 year water fluoridation program. Basel was the only city in Switzerland to fluoridate its water, and the only city in continental western Europe, outside of a few areas in Spain.