



MAYOR RICK GOLDRING  
**OFFICE OF THE MAYOR**

CITY OF WINDSOR  
COUNCIL SERVICES

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Contact:  
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**Fluoride to Continue in Halton Region**

Dear Constituent,

I have received a number of written letters, emails, and phone call comments about the decision to continue to fluoridate water in Halton Region. I want to acknowledge your feedback and explain the process and my vote at Council on Tuesday night.

On Tuesday I voted to continue to maintain fluoride in the Halton water supply. This position was a change from the position I had on the Health and Safety Committee in 2008 when the review process was initiated.

Members of Council were presented with extensive information on this subject. In addition to the ten hours we spent at Council on Tuesday, I also met with opponents of fluoridation on two separate occasions including a meeting with Dr. James Beck, MD, PhD and co-author of "The Case Against Fluoride."

The presentations to Council on the merits of fluoride were compelling. Presenters in support of continuing fluoridation included Dr. Arlene King, Chief Medical Officer, Health Ministry of Ontario; Donna Ciliska, Professor, School of Nursing, McMaster University; Stephen Birch, Health Economist, McMaster University; Dr. Dick Ito, Past president, Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry; Dr. Peter Trainor, President, Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario; and Dr Peter Cooney, Chief Dental Officer, Health Canada.

In addition to these public sector representatives, our local dental professionals also made very compelling arguments about the benefits to fluoride which they see every day.

We were also presented a number of opposing views. These opposing views pointed to studies which indicate that fluoride may impact health in other ways, and to countries that do not use fluoride in water. Questions were raised about effectiveness given that other countries and some

other parts of Canada do not follow this practice.

I felt that the expert representatives addressed these questions very effectively. We heard that countries in Europe do not fluoridate water. They do however, fluoridate salt and flour in other countries while different countries actually remove some fluoride because it already exists at a much higher level than we currently use. Other countries provide extensive and expensive public health dental programs and school dental programs.

We also heard that in British Columbia, where fluoride is not used, certain rates of cavities are up to 30% higher than in Ontario. We also saw three reports concerning municipalities that have eliminated fluoride and saw significant increases in cavities in a fairly short time - between 20-40%.

Based on all the input, and reflecting on the opposing presentations and my meetings with the opponents to fluoridation including Dr. Beck, I concluded that the best advice we are getting is the professional advice from the Regional Medical Officer, the representatives of the federal and provincial ministries and associations, and the valuable input from local dental professionals. My conclusion is that this practice is safe, effective and ethical. I also note that through extensive community survey activity we know that over 2/3rds of the community support this practice in Halton Region.

A number of councillors have questioned why this is a local matter when health is a provincial responsibility. I share this concern and feel that both the federal and provincial governments can be more forthcoming and directive on this issue. I will be raising this issue with the province and with my fellow mayors of large urban cities in the future.

Thank you for taking the time to write and call in to express your opinion on this issue with myself and all members of Regional Council.

Regards,  
Rick Goldring

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