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Editor,
My South Texas
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Dear Editor and Citizens

This is a warning to ALL parents in the region with children under ten years of age. Having tested many water supplies over the last four decades, Fluoride is generally in excess of 0.5 ppm in most of our regional water supplies. These are levels that can and will cause staining of the teeth that will range from white spots to brown discoloration of the permanent teeth particularly if your children are drinking tea, which is high in Fluoride content. . You need to take precautions with children six years of age or younger to prevent Fluorosis, with particular attention paid to banning your children from drinking tea.

Developing permanent teeth in children under the age of six are particularly susceptible to this staining referred to as "Fluorosis". Fluoride is a natural trace element necessary for the development of the tea mint. Levels of Fluoride in drinking water that exceed 1 ppm are associated with increased developmental staining in teeth. A glass of tea will have a Fluoride level of 8 ppm in addition to the water with which it was brewed. Using this water for cooking also increases the concentration of Fluoride from evaporation, all of which can contribute to Fluorosis.

Considering the other contaminants reported in our local water samples including Arsenic, it would be wise to install a point-of-use filter or a reverse osmosis drinking water system, but keep in mind that Fluoride cannot be filtered out with most reverse osmosis systems despite what these companies will tell you to sell their product. You will still need to restrict your children to drinking bottled water, and it may be necessary to cook with bottled water or water from a known source.

If you are on a rural water system, the shallow wells are extremely erratic in Fluoride content and can be dangerously high in Arsenic, Fluoride, radioactive materials or farm waste contaminants. For our patients of record, you can contact our office and we will supply you with a water sample test kit. This analysis would be a wise move for any of our patients on any of the local city water and any of the school systems. In the past, the municipal supplies of Austwell/Tivoli and especially Bayside have been high enough to cause severe damage to the developing permanent teeth in children. A good word of advice for our parents living anywhere else, if you don't know what the Fluoride level is in the water your children are drinking, have it tested, or contact the local water department for a copy of the mandatory tests.

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Editor,
Refugio County Press
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June 22, 2008

Dear Editor and Citizens of Refugio County

Recently, the Press published a letter regarding an alert concerning Fluoride levels in drinking water in Refugio County

After receiving from the Town of Refugio the “2007 Drinking Water Quality Report (Consumer Confidence Report)”, I revisited my thwarted efforts to do a comprehensive article concerning Fluoride levels in drinking water in Refugio County that I had started in 2006 but abandoned. We encountered countless roadblocks, including the fact that none of the employees of the municipalities who are required by law to have this report on hand were able to immediately locate the report. Refugio delivered the report in a reasonable short order, while other municipalities were initially unaware of the report, and my “thwarted efforts” included a published phone number that never answered.

In my letter I pointed out that “While the municipal water supplies of Refugio and Woodsboro” (historically) “have acceptable levels of Fluoride, the municipal supplies of Austwell, Tivoli, and especially Bayside have been high enough” (in the past) to cause severe damage to the developing permanent teeth in children.”

The Mayor of Bayside pointed out that the Fluoride level in the bayside public water system is now acceptable. Here’s the problem. Recent advances in advanced, large volume reverse osmosis systems will now remove Fluoride ion also. As long as the stewards of our governments are diligent, these systems will operate as they should. If there is a lapse or breakdown somewhere in the system, if the incoming upstream water has a high level of Fluoride (over 2 ppm) and is delivered downstream, even an exposure of one month during a critical stage of tooth development may cause an unsightly Fluorosis band. I know that Bayside is planning on drilling a new well, but it is important to know what the INCOMING Fluoride level to the system is. What is that number?

My advice is still the same: “if you do not know what the Fluoride level is in your water, have it tested.” I would recommend testing of any dispensing water source with an excessive incoming Fluoride level on a more regular basis than once a year. Even though Bayside is under the stewardship of a particularly capable and diligent Mayor, this will eventually change, and the residents of Bayside will either have to trust those new stewards or maintain their own diligence.

Moving on to the issue regarding diligence of our elected officials, I have two projects I have documented over the last two decades that will be brought to public awareness within the next six months. My assessment is that in general we have here in Refugio County very capable elected officials with very capable staffs. As is our human nature, we all tend to delegate responsibilities and then rely on our employees to follow through. One sterling example of how that system can begin to break down when those of us in charge fail to review responsibilities with our subordinates is the difficulty the various staffs had in recognizing the importance of their “2007 Drinking Water Quality Report (Consumer Confidence Report)”.

One of the issues I have brought up with ever single elected official who solicited my vote or support over the last two decades still lingers unaddressed. Recently, when I began looking into this specific issue, not only had not one single elected official looked into my request that may or may not mean untold millions of dollars in uncollected revenue, none of the elected officials knew how to look into the issue. I hope this letter gets everyone off of high center.

The second issue regards an issue of delegating responsibility creating a breakdown in proper application, a procedure that is costing our tax payers thousands of dollars annually. Lest any of our officials feel the need to go on the defensive, this issue ultimately regards the pervasive corporate irresponsibility we see throughout the corporate world that has, in my opinion, kept vital information from the public in a conscious effort to successfully mislead the public by omitting data regarding “cause and effect” over a long period of time.

One of the most difficult areas of research is effect from delayed cause, the area of “look back” studies. Apparently even Texas A&M failed to see the cause and effect, and this issue should have already been researched and addressed since this is in their unique and specific area of research (Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University, emphasis on Agricultural).

I will bring these next two issues to public awareness in the next six months, if necessary Once again, we have very capable elected officials who are willing to do their jobs to the best of their ability. Ultimately, it is the public that they serve who make the decisions, and occasionally it is necessary for individual members of the public to bring unaddressed issues to the awareness of the rest of the electorate.

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