Federal Judge Declares Fluoride in Drinking Water an "Unreasonable Risk" and Cities Respond by Demanding Immediate Action

December 20, 2024

As undeniable evidence mounts that fluoride harms children's brains, a historic ruling by a federal judge—and a report the government tried desperately to bury—may finally end the practice of adding this toxin to America's drinking water.

For over two decades, scientists have warned about the

harmful effects of fluoride exposure on the developing brain. Since 63% of the U.S. has fluoride in its drinking water, this is a critical issue affecting millions of Americans! Unfortunately, government agencies like CDC—along with the American Dental Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics—dismissed concerns and stubbornly continued to champion water fluoridation.

This all changed last month with a pivotal court ruling. But, first, some background: In 2016, the NIH's National Toxicology Program (NTP) was charged with analyzing the large volume of studies on fluoride's neurotoxicity. Shortly after, an advocacy group sued the EPA in a bid to force it to remove fluoride from drinking water. Knowing that a report from NTP was forthcoming, U.S. District Judge Edward Chen stayed the case until the report's release. Little did he know how long he would have to wait.

Not only did it take NTP *six years* to complete the report, but when it was ready to publish in May 2022, **officials at CDC and HHS betrayed their duty to the American people by trying to suppress the report!** Ultimately, it took another year and a court order from Judge Chen for the report to be released. As HighWire viewers may have suspected, the report did not bode well for water fluoridation.

This September, with the NTP report finally in hand, Judge Chen made his historic ruling: "[T]he Court finds that

fluoridation of water at 0.7 milligrams per liter ('mg/L') – the level presently considered 'optimal' in the United States – **poses an unreasonable risk of reduced IQ in children**." He concluded:

> [T]here is substantial and scientifically credible evidence establishing that fluoride poses a risk to human health; it is associated with a reduction in the IQ of children and is hazardous at dosages that are far too close to fluoride levels in the drinking water of the United States. And this risk is unreasonable under Amended TSCA.

The court then ordered the EPA to "to engage with a regulatory response," but the even better news is that many townships aren't waiting to protect their kids from this toxic exposure. Abilene (TX), Hillsboro (OR), Lebanon (OR), Yorktown (NY), and Winter Haven (FL) have already decided to end, or forego starting, fluoridation in the wake of the Court's ruling, and many other communities, including Lyndon (WA), Monroe (WI), Naples (FL) and Tampa Bay (FL), are considering the same. Visit the Fluoride Action Network for materials you can use to demand action in your city.

Congratulations to the legal team, with a special kudos to current Siri & Glimstad partner Michael Connett who has focused on fighting the fluoride issue, and the plaintiffs, for this landmark win that will have a lasting impact on the health of all American children! For more details, watch *The*

HighWire interview with Connett.