



HE-BI-1

Minister of Health

Ministre de la Santé

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

APR 04 2012

Regional Municipality of Peel
Office of the Regional Chair

Mr. Emil Kolb
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer
Regional Municipality of Peel
10 Peel Centre Drive
Brampton, Ontario L6T 4B9

APR 17 2012

RECEIVED

Dear Mr. Kolb:

Thank you for your correspondence of February 6, 2012, concerning Peel Regional Council's resolution to request that Health Canada regulate fluorosilicates (i.e., hexafluorosilicic acid and sodium silicofluoride) as drugs under the *Food and Drugs Act*. I regret the delay in responding.

In Canada, responsibility regarding the safety of drinking water generally lies with the provincial and territorial governments. Health Canada worked with the provinces and territories, through the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Committee on Drinking Water, to develop the *Guidelines for Canadian Drinking Water Quality*. The provinces and territories use the Guidelines to establish their own requirements for drinking water quality and have sole responsibility regarding implementation. For that reason, your request that Health Canada regulate municipal drinking water supply treatment chemicals as drugs is an issue that falls outside the jurisdiction of the *Food and Drugs Act*.

With respect to your request regarding a long-term toxicology study, Health Canada recommends that drinking water treatment additives such as fluoridation agents be certified to the appropriate standard, specifically NSF/ANSI Standard 60: Drinking Water Treatment Chemicals - Health Effects. This standard requires a toxicology review of the product to ensure its safety at the maximum use level and to evaluate potential contaminants in the product.

Regarding human clinical evidence of the efficacy of adding fluoride to water supplies, most published scientific studies on the effectiveness of water fluoridation are based on comparisons between communities with minimal fluoride levels in the water supply versus communities with fluoridation, rather than a clinical intervention. The first controlled clinical trial at a community level was conducted in the U.S. and published in 1956; a recent human double-blind placebo-controlled clinical trial on how effectively fluoride is taken up from drinking water was conducted in the U.K. in 2005.

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HE-81 -2-

The use of fluoride in the prevention of dental cavities continues to be endorsed by more than 90 national and international professional health organizations, including Health Canada. As dental disease is the number one chronic disease among children and adolescents in North America, water fluoridation is an important public health measure. The Department promotes and endorses the use of water fluoridation as a means of achieving good oral health through the prevention of cavities. Water fluoridation benefits all residents in a community, regardless of age, socioeconomic status, education, or employment or dental insurance status. I would like to clarify that the purpose of adding fluoride to water supplies is not to treat dental decay, which requires the intervention of a dentist, but to reduce the incidence of dental cavities.

Regarding your request for scientific studies specifically on the fluorosilicate compounds hydrofluorosilicic acid and sodium silicofluoride, these compounds break down in the municipal water supply to release fluoride ions. As a result, they are not found at the tap, which means that drinking water is not a source of exposure to these compounds.

Health Canada regulates fluoride in finished products for dental health care. These products contain sodium fluoride, sodium monofluorophosphate, acidulated phosphate fluoride, or stannous fluoride, not fluorosilicates. Each fluoride-containing dental health product must undergo a pre-market assessment of its quality, safety, and efficacy before it can receive a product licence authorizing its sale in Canada. Canadians have ready access to licensed fluoride dental health products that are effective in reducing the occurrence of dental caries and are not associated with any significant incidence of tooth mottling or other safety issues when used according to the recommended conditions of use.

Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,



Leona Aglukkaq



HE - B1-3

Office of the Chair

February 6, 2012

Resolution No. 2012-14

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq
Minister of Health
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Aglukkaq:

Subject: Fluoride Levels in Community Drinking Water and Toothpaste

I am writing to advise that Peel Regional Council approved the following resolution at its meeting held on January 12, 2012:

"That the Region of Peel request that Health Canada regulate the fluorosilicates hexafluorosilicic acid (H_2SiF_6) and sodium silicofluoride (Na_2SiF_6), used as a treatment for dental cavities in drinking water, as drugs under the Food and Drugs Act;

And further, that all chemicals, especially fluorosilicates, added to drinking water for the purpose of treating dental decay undergo new drug applications and be assigned drug numbers by Health Canada;

And further, that classification of fluorosilicates as drugs shall be based on at least one long-term toxicology study to determine health effects in humans;

And further, that at least one properly conducted, double blinded, randomized placebo controlled clinical trial be used to provide effectiveness as the basis for a new drug classification;

And further, that the Region of Peel make the above recommendations to Health Canada to reassure the citizens of Peel that the use of fluorosilicates added to drinking water for the purpose of treating dental decay is safe and what the health effects are;

And further, that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Federal and Provincial Minister of Health, and Peel area MPs and MPPs;

And further, that Peel MPs and MPPs be requested to follow up on this issue with the Ministers of Health and report back to Regional Council with a response."

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Resolution No. 2012-14

On behalf of Regional Council, I request that you give consideration to the above resolution as soon as possible. Please quote the Region of Peel's resolution number in your reply.

Sincerely,



Emil Kolb
Regional Chair and Chief Executive Officer

EK:tr

c: Janette Smith, Commissioner of Health
Dr. David Mowat, Medical Officer of Health

Also sent to:

Dr. Peter Cooney
Chief Dental Officer
Health Canada
A.L. 1501A, Tunney's Pasture
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Canada

The Honourable Deb Matthews
Minister of Health and Long-Term Care
10th Floor, Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario M7A 2C4

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Also Copied:

Eve Adams, MP – Mississauga-Brampton South
Stella Ambler, MP – Mississauga South
Brad Butt, MP – Mississauga-Streetsville
Bob Dechert, MP – Mississauga-Erindale
Parm Gill, MP – Brampton-Springdale
Bal Gosal, MP – Bramalea-Gore-Malton