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Major Progress at Eliminating Fluoride in Water Supplies by Fluoride Action Network

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By Paul and Ellen Connett

A year ago, the Fluoride Action Network (FAN) joined the Health Liberty Coalition, formed by Mercola.com, the National Vaccine Information Center (NVIC), the Institute for Responsible Technology (IRT), the Organic Consumers Association (OCA), and Consumers for Dental Choice.

The purpose of forming the nonprofit partnership was to advocate and actively campaign for the freedom of individuals to make personal health decisions, and to increase access to unbiased and accurate health information.

Since 2004, FAN has been dedicated to this same goal, and we were happy to join with the strong, dedicated team of advocates, researchers, and health professionals that make up the Health Liberty Coalition.

FAN is a nonprofit and international network of medical and scientific professionals who are focused on broadening public awareness about the toxicity of fluoride compounds and the health impacts of current fluoride exposures, particularly from fluoridation of the public drinking water.

When we joined the Health Liberty Coalition last year, FAN had just helped convince the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to phase out ALL sulfuryl fluoride pesticides from the U.S. food supply after a vigorous nine-year effort together with the Environmental Working Group and Beyond Pesticides.

This gas fumigant, used to kill insects and rodents in food processing warehouses, leaves extremely high levels of fluoride residue "in or on" stored foods. We were also witnessing the beginning of a groundswell of fluoride-free campaigns and victories throughout the world that have freed at least **53 communities with 3.5 million residents** from fluoridation since the October 2010 victory in Waterloo, Ontario.

Since joining the coalition, the fluoride-free movement has grown significantly. With the help of the Health Liberty coalition and Dr. Mercola, who has inspired

many fluoride-free campaigners with his call for action at the local-level, the momentum has continued to build to what could be the tipping point for the end of fluoridation.

Removing Fluoride One Community At A Time

FAN's Director, Dr. Paul Connett, has said repeatedly that, "we need to beat fluoridation one open mind and one community at a time." Since 1990, more than 300 communities have "beat fluoridation" with a city council or referendum vote to end the practice. This number doesn't include the hundreds, if not thousands of communities, who have rejected the start of fluoridation programs in their city.

In just the past year alone, FAN has confirmed that at least 40 communities have voted to end fluoridation for more than **2 million residents**, including in major urban areas such as:

- Fairbanks, Alaska (pop. 80,000)
- College Station, Texas (pop. 100,000)
- Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada (pop. 140,000)
- Albuquerque, New Mexico (pop. 500,000)
- Pinellas County, Florida (pop. 700,000)

Many of these victories were the result of regular citizens who opposed fluoridation, organizing local campaigns to educate their neighbors and local decision-makers about the serious health risks associated with the practice. But we have also seen something else happen that is a clear sign that our movement is growing at an accelerated rate.

Recently, prominent legislators and city councilors representing large cities have begun introducing **fluoride** prohibition legislation and resolutions. This is a sign that the issue is becoming less controversial in the eyes of decision-makers, and is losing its status as an undebateable issue.

The pro-fluoridation lobby—led and funded by the American Dental Association (ADA), the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Pew Charitable Trust, and Delta Dental—are no longer able to hide the true facts about water fluoridation from decision-makers:

- The U.S. FDA classifies ingested fluoride for purposes of reducing tooth decay as an "unapproved" drug. Drugs shouldn't be in our drinking water,
- Water fluoridation is a violation of your individual right to informed consent to medication,

- Fluoride is not a nutrient. There is not a single process in your body that requires fluoride,
- Bottle-fed infants receive the highest doses of fluoride as they rely solely on liquids for food, combined with their small size. A baby being fed formula reconstituted with tap water receives approximately 175-200 times more fluoride than a breast-fed infant,
- 41% of all American children aged 12-15 now have dental fluorosis, a discoloration and pitting of the enamel caused by overexposure to fluoride as a child,
- Ingesting fluoride has been found to damage soft tissues (brain, kidneys, and endocrine system), as well as teeth (dental fluorosis) and bones (skeletal fluorosis). There are also 24 studies demonstrating a strong relationship between fairly modest exposure to fluoride and reduced IQ in children
- The chemicals used to fluoridate water supplies are largely hazardous by-products of the fertilizer industry and have never been required to undergo randomized clinical trials for safety or effectiveness by any regulatory agency in the world, and
- A multi-million dollar U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) -funded study found no relation between tooth decay and the amount of fluoride ingested by children.

At the municipal-level, there are a number of major campaigns heating up in heavily populated areas, showing just how quickly the momentum is building in opposition to fluoridation:

New York City (pop. 8.1 million) -- Councilman Peter Vallone, Jr. hosted a [fluoride-free rally](#) at city hall on May 15th to promote his resolution prohibiting fluoridation of NYC drinking water. A fluoride-free victory in NYC would gain international attention and likely lead to a domino-effect of victories throughout North America. The bill awaits a public hearing, which is at the discretion of Health committee Chair. If you would like to get involved with the NYC campaign, please contact FAN's [New York state coordinator](#). You can also help by calling the Chair of the Health committee to [urge her](#) to hold a public hearing on Vallone's fluoridation prohibition resolution.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin (area pop. 1 million) – In May, Alderman James Bohl introduced fluoridation prohibition legislation. A 7-hour long public hearing was held, which included testimony from Dr. Paul Connett, Dr. Bill Osmunson, and Dr. Yolanda Whyte, and many others ([watch the full hearing](#)). The committee is holding the legislation briefly as they collect

more information and evidence from both sides. If you live in the Milwaukee area and would like to get involved, please contact [End Fluoride Milwaukee](#) (on [Facebook](#)). If you are a Milwaukee resident, or a medical or scientific professional, please [contact Milwaukee Aldermen](#).

Phoenix, Arizona (pop. 1.5 million) -- The city council is [reassessing their fluoridation program](#). The issue was raised by Councilman Tom Simplot and local fluoride-free campaigners. The city currently spends more than \$500,000 annually on fluoridation, and currently joins only 9 other Arizona communities in fluoridating their water. The city council is expected to study the issue and meet on September 11, when it will hold further hearings and decide the fate of the practice. If you live in the Phoenix area and would like to get involved, please contact FAN's [Phoenix coordinator](#). You can also help by contacting the [Phoenix Mayor and City Council](#).

Santa Fe, New Mexico (pop. 70,000) -- City councilors are considering, and reportedly "[leaning towards](#)", ending fluoridation. Santa Fe is 1 of only 2 towns in New Mexico that add fluoride to their drinking water. The issue was raised by Councilor [Chris Calvert](#) who felt the health risk and \$32,000 cost was enough reason to end the practice. If you live in the area, or are a medical or scientific professional, please [contact the council](#) and urge them to support an amendment ending fluoridation.

Anchorage, Alaska (pop. 300,000) -- On June 6th, the Anchorage Assembly Public Safety Committee held a [fact-finding meeting](#) on fluoridation. Future meetings are expected, and the locals are organizing for win. If you live in the Anchorage area, please contact FAN's [Anchorage coordinator](#). You can also contact [Anchorage Councilors](#) and urge them to end fluoridation like Fairbanks and Juneau.

Making A Statement At The State-Level

FAN has also been increasing our focus on influencing fluoride-policy at the state-level. Over the past decade, we have seen the dental-lobby spending more effort and money trying to influence state-legislators to pass bills mandating statewide fluoridation. Just last year, Arkansas legislators passed a fluoride mandate bill without hearings, without public discussion, and as quickly and undemocratically as possible.

This year, the dental-lobby was again trying to force fluoridation down the throats of non-consenting citizens in New Jersey, Vermont, and Florida, where legislation and amendments mandating fluoride were introduced. Fortunately, strong opposition to these mandates have killed the bills in Vermont and Florida before hearings were ever held, and the mandatory fluoridation bill in New Jersey seems to have stalled before getting a vote by either the Assembly or Senate.

On the fluoride-free side, this year two bills were introduced in NH calling for a prohibition of fluoridation. In Illinois, legislators introduced a bill to end the state-wide [fluoridation mandate](#) there. And in Tennessee, a legislator introduced a bill to study the effects of fluoride on the human body, and another legislator introduced a bill requiring accountability for [drinking water additives](#).

But the biggest state victory over the past year was in New Hampshire. On August 4th, 2012, the state of New Hampshire will become the first state to require fluoridating communities to warn their citizens about the fluorosis risk the additive poses to infants. On June 7, Governor John Lynch signed [HB1416](#), "an act relative to a required fluoride statement." The law will require the following notice on all consumer confidence reports, which must be mailed to all water consumers, be posted online, and available at city halls:

"Your public water supply is fluoridated. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, if your child under the age of 6 months is exclusively consuming infant formula reconstituted with fluoridated water, there may be an increased chance of dental fluorosis. Consult your child's health care provider for more information."

This new law is a proactive approach to reducing NH fluorosis rates by notifying parents about the risk posed to their infants by fluoridated water. Not only should the law cause more parents to take preventative action by reducing infant fluoride exposure, but it should also inspire them to question why this toxic substance is in their tap water in the first place if it isn't safe for infant consumption. This marks a point when the State of New Hampshire has officially recognized that fluoridated water poses a risk to NH infants; a risk backed up by countless studies and a growing fluorosis epidemic that afflicts 41% of U.S. adolescents.

The legislation was opposed by more than a dozen groups, including the NH Dental Association, the NH Oral Health Coalition, Delta Dental, the American Water Works Association, the Municipal Association, and the NH Department of Health and Human Services. Even with this strong opposition from the well-financed dental lobby, the bill was still passed by the NH House by a [vote of 253-23](#), and [passed unanimously](#) by the NH Senate. HB-1416 was also signed quickly by Governor John Lynch, rather than being approved without his signature, showing his strong support for this action.