

Testimony of Beth Hahn

January 16, 2013

It is simply not true that fluoride is safe for everyone and harmful to no one.

I have multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS), which is considered a disability under federal law (Americans with Disabilities Act). It is critical for people with MCS to avoid exposure to chemicals. I am hypersensitive to fluoride and have been told by my doctors to avoid it. Even small amounts cause me to have severe reactions.

The American Academy of Environmental Medicine explains MCS as “a very real chronic medical condition that has been only slowly gaining the public recognition it deserves. Recent estimates suggest that chemical sensitivity, that is, hyper-reactivity to various environmental agents (also known as incitants or triggers), **may afflict something like 10-15% of the American population.**” Fluoride-containing water is considered an incitant.

<http://www.aeonline.org/chemicalsensitivitypost.html>

I expend a tremendous amount of time, energy, and money to stay healthy enough to remain a functional and productive member of this community in spite of having chemical sensitivity. This will likely be impossible if Portland water is fluoridated, given my known hypersensitivity to fluoride, and that there is no way to avoid exposure if fluoride is present in our water.

Common water and shower filters that address chlorine, lead, and disinfection by-products do not remove fluoride. The only option for fluoride removal is reverse osmosis (RO) or distillation which are very expensive both to buy and maintain. Additionally, RO removes only about about 94% of fluoride, and this is not enough for hypersensitive individuals. To avoid health consequences, exposure must be eliminated, not just minimized. Additionally, RO wastes 3-5 gallons of water for every gallon it produces. I would need to use purified water for both drinking and cooking, so this is a lot of water.

Additionally, removing fluoride just from drinking water does not resolve the problem for the chemically sensitive. Fluoride is readily absorbed through the skin (bathing and showering compound fluoride ingestion). For the hypersensitive, *all sources of exposure must be removed to avoid serious health consequences.* Shower filters will not remove fluoride. Whole house RO systems are thousands of dollars, putting them out of reach for all but the very wealthy.

If you force fluoridation on people who are medically unable to tolerate it, there are Portlanders who will suffer serious health consequences who will have no way to opt out of exposure.

Since chemical sensitivity is considered a disability under the Americans with Disabilities Act, how does the city plan to accommodate me, and others like me, who cannot tolerate fluoride, and who have been told by our physicians to avoid it?

It is easy for those who want fluoride to obtain it. It is impossible for those of us who are unable to tolerate it to avoid exposure if it is in our water. Let's look at other options to address dental decay that will ensure the health of all Portland's citizens, rather than leaving some of us with no way out.

Sincerely,
Beth Hahn
5246 NE Flanders St.
Portland, Oregon 97213
bethha@comcast.net

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Beth Hahn [bethha@comcast.net]
Sent: Friday, December 28, 2012 4:24 PM
To: Moore-Love, Karla
Cc: Charlie White
Subject: January 16 communication

Karla,

I just talked to Charlie White. I am verifying that I would like you to reserve a communication spot for me on January 16. I will drop the form in the mail tomorrow.

Beth Hahn

5246 NE Flanders St.

Portland, Oregon 97213

503 231 0728

My topic will be fluoride and chemical sensitivity.

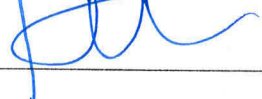
Request of Beth Hahn to address Council regarding fluoride and chemical sensitivity (Communication)

JAN 16 2013

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Filed JAN 11 2013

LaVonne Griffin-Valade
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 

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