

ESD 13-06 Notifying Residents Regarding Potential Health Effects of Fluoridated Water in Baby Formula

Lead Department Environmental Services

History **1 year ago** None **2 years ago** None

1. What are the key elements of the issue? What precipitated it?

Councilmember Meyering proposed, and Councilmember Whittum seconded, a study issue that would explore the possibility of notifying residents of any potential health effects of using fluoridated water in baby formula. This notification could come in several forms such as utility bill inserts, language in the City's annual Water Quality Report, and a posting on the City's website.

City residents receive potable water from one of three sources. First, the Santa Clara Valley Water District provides water to the southern half of the City. This water currently does not contain fluoride, though the District Board has recently voted to study the inclusion of fluoride in their water supply. The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) provides water to the northern half of the City from the Hetch-Hetchy Reservoir system. This water does contain fluoride. These two sources are supplemented by groundwater from the City's system of seven operating wells, which does not contain fluoride.

The benefits of using fluoride in the water supply to protect the dental health of residents are well accepted by the scientific community. However, some research has shown that there is a remote possibility that if exclusively fluoridated water is used in baby formula, there may be an increased risk, over time, of dental fluorosis, a condition that effects the development of tooth enamel.

The California Department of Public Health (DPH) is the regulating agency for the City's water distribution system and is the governing authority regarding the use of fluoride in the water supply. Any language that is used to notify City residents about possible health effects of using exclusively fluoridated water in baby formula must be approved by DPH prior to its distribution to City residents. Language regarding possible risks may be included, along with language urging residents to contact their physician for more specific direction. However, the benefits of fluoride in the drinking water supply should be explained along side the advisory statement.

2. How does this relate to the General Plan or existing City Policy?

General Plan Goal EM-3: Proactively maintain the Water Distribution System infrastructure to ensure the reliable and safe delivery of water under normal and emergency conditions to both current and future consumers (Previously Water Resources Goal C/ Adopted in 2008).

General Plan Goal EM-4: Ensure that all water meets State and Federal standards for aesthetics, quality and health (previously Water Resources Goal D/ Adopted in 2008).

General Plan Policy EM-4.1: Maintain and update a comprehensive water quality monitoring program that meets or exceeds all State and Federal requirements, while also meeting specific City and residents' needs.

3. Origin of issue

Council Member(s) Meyering, Whittum

4. Staff effort required to conduct study Minor

Briefly explain the level of staff effort required

After obtaining DPH approval of language to be distributed to residents, staff can include this information on utility bills or as a bill insert, in the annual Water Quality Report, and on the City's website.

5. Multiple Year Project? No **Planned Completion Year** 2013

6. Expected participation involved in the study issue process?

Does Council need to approve a work plan? No
Does this issue require review by a Board/Commission? No
If so, which?
Is a Council Study Session anticipated? No

7. Briefly explain if a budget modification will be required to study this issue

Amount of budget modification required 0

Explanation

No budget modification would be required to study this issue.

8. Briefly explain potential costs of implementing study results, note estimated capital and operating costs, as well as estimated revenue/savings, include dollar amounts

Are there costs of implementation? Yes

Explanation

Actual costs can range from \$300 for a message on utility bills (if space can be found) to \$10,000 for full color bill inserts with graphics. Staff can create and distribute a utility bill insert that uses language approved by the California Department of Public Health (DPH) and include similar language in the City's Annual Water Quality Report and on the City's website. DPH approval would be required as they are the regulating agency for the City's water distribution system.

9. Staff Recommendation

Staff Recommendation Drop

If 'Support', 'Drop' or 'Defer', explain

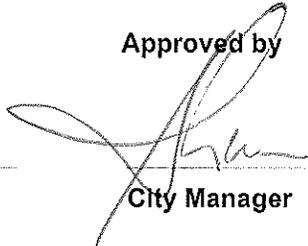
Staff recommends dropping this study issue as it is an operational issue regarding public notification of existing service levels. It will be considered for implementation within a six month time period.

Reviewed by


Department Director

1-23-12
Date

Approved by


City Manager

1-23-12
Date