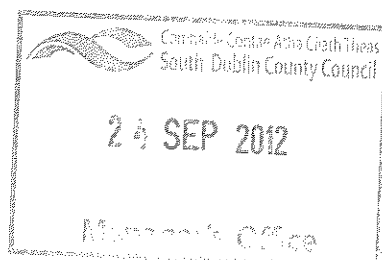




21 September 2012



Ms Mary Maguire  
Meetings Administrator  
Corporate Services Department  
South Dublin County Council  
County Hall  
Tallaght  
Dublin 24

Dear Ms Maguire,

The Minister for Health, Dr. James Reilly, T.D., has asked me to thank you for your recent letter concerning the motion passed regarding the policy of water fluoridation.

In 2000 the Forum on Fluoridation was established to review this policy. The Forum was comprised largely of persons with expert knowledge, spanning the areas of public health, dental health, food safety, environmental protection, ethics, water quality and health promotion, and included consumer representatives. The main conclusion of the Report of the Forum on Fluoridation 2002 was that the fluoridation of public piped water supplies should continue as a public health measure.

The Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health, established in 2004, monitors new and emerging issues on fluoride and its effects on health and related matters. It advises that the balance of scientific evidence worldwide confirms that water fluoridation, at the optimal level, does not cause any ill effects and is the safest and most cost effective method of protecting the oral health of the population. The report of the EU Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER), published in 2011, has not made any findings of negative health or environmental effects concerning fluoridation of water.

Tooth decay has a significant impact on health and wellbeing and results in high costs to both the individual and the State. Water fluoridation and the use of appropriate fluorides continues to be a major plank of public health policy in Ireland in the prevention and management of tooth decay.

Given that the Forum on Fluoridation has already reviewed this policy and that the Expert Body on Fluorides and Health continues to provide impartial, evidence-based, expert advice on fluoridation, the Minister does not consider it necessary to commission another review.

I trust that this clarifies the matter for you.

Yours sincerely

  
Stephen Doran  
Private Secretary