



水務署  
Water Supplies Department

香港灣仔告士打道七號入境事務大樓  
Immigration Tower, 7 Gloucester Road, Hong Kong

電子郵遞  
e-mail [wsdinfo@wsd.gov.hk](mailto:wsdinfo@wsd.gov.hk)

電話 Telephone 2829 4351 圖文傳真 Facsimile 2511 9080

檔號 Reference ( ) in WSD/1695/3/82 Pt.14

The Editor  
South China Morning Post  
<letters@scmp.com>

6<sup>th</sup> February 2014

Dear Chief Editor,

**Fluoridation of water supply in Hong Kong**

I refer to the letter by G. Holloway (“Orwellian practice must end in HK”, January 27) concerning fluoridation of public water supply in Hong Kong.

According to the advice of the World Health Organization (WHO), a low level of fluoride in drinking water provides protection against dental caries. Its "Guidelines for Drinking-water Quality (2011)" has reaffirmed the health-based value of 1.5 mg/L for fluoride in drinking water after an extensive review of scientific studies and literature. A systematic review of scientific literature on the efficacy and safety of fluoridation published in 2008 also concluded that fluoridation of drinking water remains the most effective and socially equitable means of achieving community-wide exposure to the caries prevention effects of fluoride.

A large number of epidemiological studies have been conducted in many countries concerning the effects of long-term exposure to fluoride. There is so far no conclusive scientific evidence on any health hazard of long-term exposure to a very low amount of fluoride in drinking water.

Fluoridation of water supply in Hong Kong is implemented in accordance with the advice of the Department of Health (DH) as a preventive measure to reduce dental decay in the community. The average fluoride content in treated water supplied by the Water Supplies Department (WSD) is 0.49 mg/L during the period of October 2012 - September 2013, which is below both the DH and WHO's recommended levels.

The need to add fluoride to drinking water depends on the concentration of naturally-occurring fluoride in the water sources. According to the information from the WHO, traces of fluorides are present in many waters, with higher concentrations often associated with groundwaters. High fluoride concentrations can be found in Mainland China and many parts of the world, particularly in parts of India, Central Africa and South America. Thus, it is not suitable to directly compare the practices in other areas.

The WSD and the DH will continue to monitor closely the fluoride content in the drinking water supply in Hong Kong and the latest scientific development on the subject.

Yours faithfully,

David WONG  
Senior Engineer/Public Relations  
Water Supplies Department