



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OFFICE OF
WATER

AUG 12 1997

Honorable Bill Young
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-0910

Dear Congressman Young:

Thank you for your letter of July 5, 1997, to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) requesting consideration of your constituent, Mr. George Glasser, regarding the American Dental Association listing of EPA as an endorser of water fluoridation. Mr. Glasser also wrote to EPA directly concerning this matter.

EPA has responded to Mr. Glasser's letter providing him with information on the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) regulation for fluoride and referring him to the Centers for Disease research on fluoridation in this country. In addition, EPA has written to the American Dental Association requesting that EPA be deleted from the list of supporters of fluoridation. The SDWA prohibits EPA from requiring or supporting the addition of any substance (including fluoride) to drinking water for preventative health care purposes. As a consequence, State or local authorities determine whether or not to fluoridate their water supply.

Fluoride in drinking water is regulated by EPA under Section 1412 of the SDWA. On April 2, 1986, EPA set a revised Maximum Contaminant Level (an enforceable Federal Primary standard) at 4 mg/L to protect against crippling skeletal fluorosis, an adverse health effect. In addition, EPA set a nonenforceable secondary Maximum Contaminant Level of 2 mg/L to protect against objectionable dental fluorosis (tooth discoloration). Depending on local conditions, fluoridation in this country is practiced at a level of about 1 mg/L which is well below the current 4 mg/L SDWA Federal standard.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding fluoridation, please do not hesitate to contact Jeanette Wiltse, Director, Health and Ecological Criteria Division, at 202-260-5389 or have your staff call Joyce Donohue at 202-260-1318.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Perciasepe".

Robert Perciasepe
Assistant Administrator