

■ **FLUORIDE:** Burrell looking for direction before vote

City councillor wants debate

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A city councillor wants a debate on the continued use of fluoride in drinking water.

Coun. Terry Burrell said he needs direction from the city before a vote on whether or not to remove fluoride from local drinking water occurs this January.

Burrell, who represents council on the Lambton Area Water Supply System (LAWSS) board, has introduced a motion to council asking for a full debate, including expert speakers on both sides of the issue, and community input.

If his motion is passed today the debate would take place at the Dec. 7 council meeting.

"When it comes up at LAWSS it is an important community-wide thing so I want to vote based on how council votes as opposed to just my own personal feelings," Burrell said.

The fluoride debate has been going on at the LAWSS board for over a year after Health Canada released updated data asking municipalities to lower their fluoride usage.

Local fluoride rates were already well within acceptable standards. Burrell said his resolution would give the issue a full public airing.

"Some people in the community are very interested and this will give them a forum," he said.

Burrell said he knows the medical and dental communities want to weight in on the debate.

The fluoride debate has been repeatedly delayed at the LAWSS board level as the group waited for a report from Health Canada. Now, the water system manager has left, pushing the issue back yet again.

"We can't wait forever," Burrell said.

Sarnia Mayor Mike Bradley said he still favours the issue being decided by a plebiscite.

It takes 10 per cent of the public to sign a petition to get a question on the ballot.

He thinks the whole fluoride debate is being driven by politicians not the public.

"We should keep out of it and let the public have the debate," he said.

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