Too toxic for cattle but okay for humans?

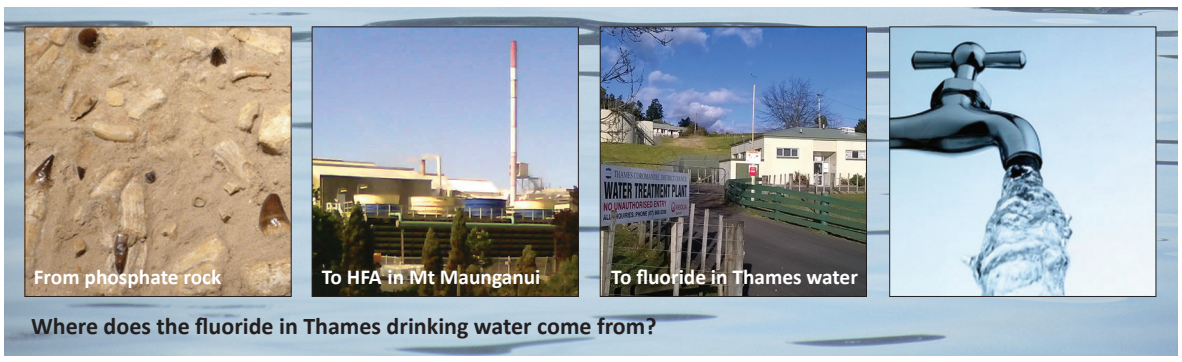
The dangers of fluorosis (fluoride toxicity) in cattle and other livestock are very real from the ingestion of heavily fertilised pasture especially when combined with drinking fluoridated water. Thames is the only town in the Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki districts that is fluoridated. A New Zealand farmer-owned fertiliser co-operative, supplies the hydrofluorosilicic acid (HFA) that goes into the Thames water supply.

HFA, colloquially referred to as 'fluoride', is added to the Thames water supply for the sole purpose of attempting to reduce the effects on teeth of over-consumption of sugary foods and drinks.

Some claim HFA is specially made for the purpose others that it is a toxic waste. What is the real story?

Forget images of white-coated scientists in pristine pharmaceutical laboratories overseeing production of HFA. Picture instead hard hats, steel toe caps, goggles and protective clothing in an industrial chemical plant of vats, scrubbing towers and chimney stacks.

Superphosphate fertiliser is manufactured at a plant in Mount Maunganui and HFA is produced as a by-product. The raw material, phosphate rock, is imported from around the world including the Moroccan occupied territory of Western Sahara. It is mined from ancient sea beds, the fossils of fish being a rich source of phosphate and fluoride.



Where does the fluoride in Thames drinking water come from?

HFA is a hazardous waste product that cannot be dumped into natural waterways

At the fertiliser plant it is finely ground to form a powdered rock. Acid is added to release the phosphorus, and superphosphate is produced along with toxic gases. Causing harm to plant and animal life, these gases cannot be allowed to escape into the atmosphere so are captured in a fine water spray. The chemical reaction results in HFA.

HFA is also recognised as a hazardous waste product that cannot be dumped into natural waterways, the ground or air. However, by selling HFA for water fluoridation it is effectively relabelled as a product for preventing tooth decay and appears to be no longer controlled by resource management laws and is allowed to be added to drinking water. Before leaving the fertiliser plant, the only safety testing done is to check contaminant levels do not exceed limits set by the water industry including for hydrofluoric acid, lead, arsenic, mercury and uranium.

Unlike chlorine or UV, which reduce micro-organism content to make the water safe to drink, HFA does not improve the safety of the water. In fact many people, including doctors, dentists and scientists across the world, believe HFA actually makes the water unsafe to drink. As does fetal pathotoxicologist Dr Vyvyan Howard who, speaking about fluoridation, said "The weight of evidence is actually more in favour of fluoride doing damage than against."

Fluoride is as unsafe for humans as it is for cattle, especially when the amount consumed is impossible to control. It has been associated with many ill health effects including dental fluorosis, hormonal upset, reduced IQ in children, bone cancer, fractures and ADHD. Babies and children are especially vulnerable. Why drink this hazardous waste when you can brush your teeth?

www.fluoridefree.org.nz

Council votes on referendum date

Thames is the only town in the Coromandel District that has fluoride added to its water. At its meeting on 5 August Thames Coromandel District Council voted unanimously to have a referendum on fluoridation in the Thames water supply on 5 November 2015.

Water fluoridation has been a contentious issue in New Zealand since the first experiment in Hastings in the 1950's. It was contentious when it was introduced to Thames in 1971 and has become more so since the change in fluoride chemical from sodium fluoride to hydrofluorosilicic acid (HFA) in 2009.

HFA, a hazardous waste product of the phosphate fertiliser industry, has never undergone clinical trials under claims fluoride from HFA is the same as that from naturally occurring calcium fluoride. But even naturally occurring fluoride has been associated with a host of health issues.

The World Health Organisation lists excess fluoride in its top ten 'chemicals of major public health concern'. WHO [2010] cites fluorosis of tooth enamel and bone as negative effects following prolonged high exposure. Since water fluoridation was introduced, dental fluorosis has become common in New Zealand. The 2009 New Zealand Oral Health Survey found 44.5% of 8-35 year olds with evidence of dental fluorosis. UNICEF has mapped New Zealand as one of 25 countries worldwide with endemic fluorosis.

Dentists concerned about fluoridation

Three New Zealand dentists who have a special interest in fluoridation will speak in Thames at a free public talk on 5 September.

With the referendum on whether Thames should stop fluoridation of its water supply coming up on 5 November, this is a timely opportunity for Thames residents to find out more and ask their unanswered questions.

"A great way to become informed" says an organiser Martin Sim.


Dr Lawrie Brett


Dr Stan Litras


Dr John Lukes

Dr Lawrie Brett, a practising dentist in Whangarei, graduated in 1974 from Otago Dental School. He had also studied chemistry and his interest in water fluoridation follows a focus on preventative dentistry.

Dr Brett has researched this topic for 35 years, has published internationally and been president of the New Zealand Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology.

He does not hold to the orthodoxy that fluoride is safe to use in dental medicine nor that water fluoridation actually works.

Dr Stan Litras is a practising dentist in Wellington. He was previously active in the New Zealand Dental Association as president of his local branch and as a board member nationally.

He is convenor of Fluoride In formation Network for Dentists which has an excellent website on the science of fluoridation at www.fluoridation.nz.

Dr John Jukes is a practicing dentist in Waipukurau, Central Hawkes Bay, where he was instrumental in ending fluoridation.