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20 November 2024

Ref. H2024053473

Alex Parmley  
Chief Executive  
Waitaki District Council  
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Tēnā koe Alex

Thank you for your correspondence of 10 October 2024 regarding community water fluoridation in Ōamaru.

I appreciate your informing me and my team of your temporary pause on fluoridation while you recalibrate the dosing to ensure it is within the appropriate concentrations.

Your letter also seeks assurance that the Waitaki District Council will not be subject to penalty if the Council ceases fluoridation until the judicial review process is complete. As outlined in my 5 July 2024 letter to you, as was confirmed by the High Court on 16 February and 24 May 2024, the directions to fluoridate remain valid.

It would be inappropriate and possibly unlawful for the Ministry to constrain its enforcement function through private contract. The Ministry is not permitted to fetter its discretion to prosecute through private arrangements and must not act inconsistently with the purposes of the Health Act 1956 and Solicitor-General's Prosecution Guidelines. The Ministry's responsibility is to uphold the public interest when exercising its regulatory functions.

You've asked about information available to the public about community water fluoridation. The Ministry of Health website provides clear and concise evidence-based information about the safety and effectiveness of community water fluoridation, including videos from community leaders. The website also provides information about the rationale for the Director-General of Health directions to fluoridate.

The Ministry can also assist local authorities by providing further information. I'm advised that last year my team provided Waitaki District Council with a locally tailored presentation about community water fluoridation and a question and answer document. Please be in touch with my team if you'd like further information. You can contact them at [fluoride@health.govt.nz](mailto:fluoride@health.govt.nz)

Thank you for your ongoing collaboration as we work to improve the oral health of the communities we each serve.

Nāku noa, nā



Dr Diana Sarfati  
**Director-General of Health**  
**Te Tumu Whakarae mō te Hauora**