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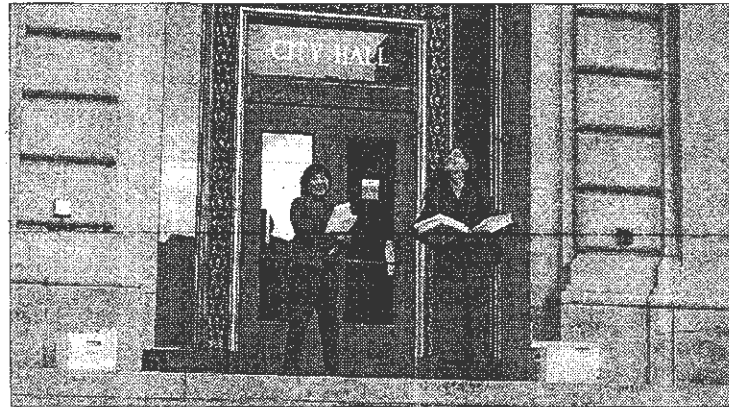
Chloramine concerns continue

12 residents file claims with SFPUC over H₂O disinfectant

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SAN FRANCISCO — Twelve residents, most in San Mateo County, have filed claims with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission for damages they say were caused by the addition of chloramine into the agency's water supply.

The claims were delivered to City Hall on Friday according to one petitioner, Menlo Park resident Denise Johnson-Kula, who said they want the SFPUC to either stop using the disinfectant in the Hetch Hetchy water system or spring for water filtration systems to remove the chemical. Johnson-Kula and the other 11 petitioners claim the SFPUC's switch from chlorine to chloramine as a disinfectant in the Peninsula's water supply in Feb-



COURTESY PHOTO

Lillian Lieberman and Denise Johnson-Kula deliver the personal histories of chloramine sufferers at San Francisco City Hall.

ruary by the SFPUC has caused a variety of skin and respiratory ailments.

Johnson-Kula already had a separate lawsuit dismissed in Superior Court in December regarding her claims that the addition of chloramine had caused her serious asthma-related medical problems when she showered, claims supported by a written statement from her doctor. Now

she has found others with similar complaints that have joined her in lodging the claims against the SFPUC. She said the claims were a first step in what she hoped would ultimately lead to another lawsuit that would force the water utility to eliminate chloramine from their system.

"Ultimately, we want the SFPUC to stop using chloramine in the water until they can be

sure that it's safe," Johnson-Kula said. "I'm going to fight this to the very end...it's my life, I mean I can't use my water."

Johnson-Kula said her life has become nearly impossible since the disinfectant was added to her water supply — she has to shower at her family's home an hour away, she cannot do her laundry at her apartment and drinks only bottled water.

Tony Winnicker, spokesman for the SFPUC, said no research had shown any adverse medical side-effects and the agency would continue to use chloramine in the water because it is the safest option for its customers. The agency must, under federal guidelines, use either chlorine or chloramine as a disinfectant.

For more information on chloramines, go to the SFPUC's Web site at www.sfwater.org, and to participate in a survey by San Francisco's Public Health department documenting chloramine side effects, call 415-252-3973.

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