

16 February 2009
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Ann Moeller-Caen
San Francisco Public Utilities Commission
1155 Market Street, 4th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103

Dear Madam:

I am writing to urge the SFPUC to adopt the resolution on Chloramine Disinfection as supported by your Citizens' Advisory Committee.

The activist group Citizens Concerned about Chloramine recently gave a presentation to the Environmental Health Committee of the Santa Clara County Medical Association. They provided compelling evidence of the need to review the EPA's regulations affecting the adoption of chloraminated water. As you know, the concern over tri-halo methanes and their carcinogenic potential led to regulations favoring the treatment of water with chloramine.

However, there have been multiple anecdotal reports, as many as 400 in the Bay Area, of adverse health effects associated with chloraminated water, ranging from respiratory symptoms, to severe skin rashes to gastrointestinal disturbances. In addition, a study conducted by Plewa et.al. concluded that chloraminated water can produce other disinfection by products with extreme carcinogenic potential, in particular iodoacetic acid. Also, simple filtration cannot eliminate chloramine from the water supply.

As a health care provider, I am concerned by the health hazards resulting from chloraminated water. I am equally concerned about simply not knowing the health impacts of chloramine-treated water because adequate studies have not been done. How can a doctor take care of people if their symptoms can be caused by something as pervasive as water? It is time for the EPA to conduct a study looking at the health impacts of chloramine, and I urge you to adopt the resolution.

Sincerely,

Ken Yew, MD

