

[LETTERS]



SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

In a letter in the November/December 2013 edition of *Engineering Dimensions* (“A one-sided view of fluoridation,” p. 66), Susan Shaw, P.Eng., expresses concern with the article, “The role of professional engineers in maintaining the policy of public water fluoridation in Ontario (*Engineering Dimensions*, September/October 2013, p. 48). She, however, did not present any evidence to refute anything mentioned in said article other than the broad reference to Health Canada who, to this day, has not addressed any of the issues of concern with water fluoridation expressed in our fully referenced article. This article points out correctly that engineering science avoids tautology for obvious reasons. Engineers don’t sign off on a bridge because they believe the bridge is safe or because bridges are said to be safe, but because the math, physics, metallurgy, etc., prove that it is safe. Our article showed that fluoridation is based on tautology. Shaw, along with Health Canada and those who support this practice are, yet again, demonstrating another perfect example of fluoridation tautology with no empirical science to support their opinion.

Perhaps Shaw can show from Health Canada literature why hydrofluorosilicic acid (HFSA), the chemical used for water fluoridation along with pharmaceutical grade fluoride, are not approved as natural health products. In fact, they cannot be sold in health food stores—it is only available by prescription. And why is it illegal to use HFSA by dentists, or to add to toothpastes and dispose of in the environment?

It is very troubling to see so many experts, especially engineers, place their trust in the status quo instead of doing their own due diligence in technical matters such as this, especially when, as in this example, the

inconsistencies have already been pointed out. This casts doubt on other areas of engineering practice and gives a black mark to our profession!

The *Professional Engineers Act* defines practice of professional engineering as “any act of planning, designing, composing, evaluating, advising, reporting, directing or supervising that requires the application of engineering principles and concerns the safeguarding of life, health, property, economic interests, the public welfare or the environment, or the managing of any such act.”

Given the above, it should serve well for PEO to have a position statement stating why it does not support water fluoridation.

As for the October 12 *London Free Press* published letter, I should like to point out that my original letter was sent to the London city council. It included the water fluoridation article for supporting information only, as it so clearly expressed the concerns of many constituents. It was intended to provide a better understanding for future deliberations on this issue and in no way represents the opinion or policy of *Engineering Dimensions* or PEO. The letter was copied to the *London Free Press*, who changed the intent of my original letter and published it without my consultation or permission.

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Letters to the editor are welcomed, but must be kept to no more than 500 words, and are subject to editing for length, clarity and style. Publication is at the editor’s discretion; unsigned letters will not be published. The ideas expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions and policies of the association, nor does the association assume responsibility for the opinions expressed. Emailed letters should be sent with “Letter to the editor” in the subject line.

All letters pertaining to a current PEO issue are also forwarded to the appropriate committee for information. Address letters to jcoombes@peo.on.ca.

CORRECTION

In the news article, “PEO court decision reflected in Ontario Building Code update” (January/February 2014, p. 16), we incorrectly stated that the new building code no longer includes a table describing rules for design and general review of buildings by professional engineers and architects. In fact, the table still exists but it now includes only rules for general review. The rules for design were removed as a result of a 2007 divisional court decision, since PEO has jurisdiction over matters of design but not general review.

AD INDEX

Carleton University carleton.ca	p. 12
HC Group hcgroupp.ca	p. 15
Manulife Financial www.manulife.com	p. 43
Ontario Professional Engineers Foundation for Education www.engineersfoundation.ca	p. 11
ScotiaMcLeod www.scotiamcleod.com	p. 9
TD Meloche Monnex www.melochemonnex.com	p. 44
University of Waterloo uwaterloo.ca	p. 2, 19