

## **How I became involved in the fluoridation battle**

By Declan Waugh

To begin, I must confess that I am both honoured and to a degree ashamed that I have been asked to write about how I became involved in the global struggle against water fluoridation. After all it is a struggle for human rights and environmental justice, two issues which concern me greatly. Also, when you know the details it is an issue that challenges common sense: i.e. mass medicating the population with untested industrial chemicals.

Ireland has the dubious honour of being the very first country in the world, to practice mandatory fluoridation. This came about courtesy of the late H. Trendley Dean who paid us a visit in 1960 promoting water fluoridation. He, with other American experts, including the notorious Manhattan project toxicologist Harold Hodge, encouraged the Government through the Minister for Health to introduce national legislation *mandating* that all local authorities must fluoridate their drinking water supplies. Since that time thanks largely to failed government health and childcare policy Ireland now has the shocking distinction of having the lowest prevalence of breast feeding in the Europe, if not world. This also sadly means we have the highest exposure of children to fluoride with over 90% of infants consuming formula milk made with fluoridated tap water at 6 months of age. I represent the first generation of this country to have been exposed to the dangers of fluoride from the moment I was born.

### **A silent catastrophe**

Ireland is currently facing a severe economic and health care crisis alongside social and environmental issues that at times make it almost impossible for the voice of reason to be heard above the din of one catastrophe after another. Yet fluoridation is a silent catastrophe, one that impacts every family in this country today, as it does for other countries around the world that continue to support such a crude and dangerous policy.

I am first and foremost embarrassed because as an environmental scientist with a background in resource management, including water and waste management, environmental impact assessment and environmental due diligence, I should have been educated and aware of the concerns surrounding artificial fluoridation; yet I was blissfully ignorant on this subject until relatively recently. I have often asked myself why this was?

### **Kept in the dark**

Why was I not taught about the environmental risks of fluoride as an environmental contaminant in college? Why likewise do so many of my peers and colleagues who practice in various scientific disciplines in Ireland know so little about this subject, which directly and

indirectly impacts on their quality of life, their families and communities as well as their natural environment?

With no one questioning them, false perceptions can take on a life of their own. Fluoride was seen largely and incorrectly as a nutrient, not as a pollutant or dangerous substance. We simply were not informed of the risks it posed and were denied the opportunity to examine this subject scientifically and in a manner that would allow for open and transparent debate. Fluoridation has been going on so long in Ireland (since 1963) that most people are oblivious of the ethical violation involved: i.e. the fact that Irish citizens have been denied the right to give their informed consent to this medical practice. A political policy has been blindly pursued by the Irish Government for nearly 50 years while the public and health practitioners have been kept in the dark about the human health and environmental costs of this dangerous and unethical practice.

So how did I come to be where I am at today? What was the motivation that drove me to dedicate the best part of the last 16 months of my personal and professional life to educating myself and others within my community to the dangers posed by water fluoridation?

### **A chance encounter**

As with most journeys it started with a chance encounter. That came one Saturday morning in the autumn of 2011 during a conversation with an individual at my local farmers market in Bandon, West Cork. The subject of fluoridation was brought up and I was asked by this person - an engineer by profession - if I would examine the evidence about the harm that fluoridation may be causing. He informed me that this was of great concern to him personally. This was the very first time that anyone had ever raised this issue with me. I must admit I was sceptical at first but gave my word that I would look into the subject. Thus the awakening from my slumber began.

This event also coincided with the birth of our first child and it was in the late hours of the night - while my newborn infant slept in her Moses crib and my wife was asleep between feeds - that I began to examine the evidence. I started by reading the U.S. National Research Council's report on fluoride in drinking water (NRC, 2006) and then the EU Commission's Scientific Committee on Health and Environmental Risks (SCHER) report on fluoride published in 2010.

### **Putting the pieces together**

Slowly over the next few weeks my appetite for information grew and the more I read the more alarmed I became. Alarmed is an understatement, I was shocked, livid, astounded and flabbergasted. As I looked with great concern at my innocent newborn baby I slowly pieced

together the health statistics for this country while collating the published international scientific evidence demonstrating potential harm to human health from exposure to fluoride and silicofluorides.

It was instantly clear to me that what I was uncovering in my research was of such enormous importance that it had to be documented in a manner that could be used to educate others. This is what I attempted to do.

### **A mammoth task**

To complete this mammoth task I shelved all my professional work and spent the next few months reading every scientific paper on the subject that I could find. This work would have proved almost impossible without the previous efforts of the Fluoride Action Network and their incredible website of information, particularly their Health Database.

I finally finished my report at the end of February and published it in hardcopy form for circulation to Government Ministers, the Irish EPA, Inland fisheries, Department of Environment as well as submitting copies to the European Parliament, the EU Commission, the European Environment Agency and the World Health Organisation, to name but a few.

### **Irish school children getting involved**

Unknown to me - at the same time - a group of secondary students from Mercy Mounthawk School in Tralee in County Kerry were also asking questions and undertaking their own research on fluoridation with the help of an amazing lady Martha Brassil.

I believe that these students are the first group of teenagers in Ireland to demand an end to water fluoridation. The highlights of their year were:

- 1) Making a presentation to a group of politicians in the Irish parliament.
- 2) Recording an anti-fluoridation song.
- 3) Winning honours from the President of Ireland in the 2012 national young social innovators awards programme.

From this seed has sprung a new generation of fluoride and human rights advocates. For example, Aisling Fitzgibbon a occupational/nutritional therapist -along with a remarkable group of volunteers – has spearheaded a nationwide public campaign against fluoride under the banner of '*The Girl Against Fluoride.*'

This year a new group of transition year students from Mercy Mounthawk have launched an educational campaign, organised by the students themselves to raise awareness of fluoride in other schools under the banner '*Little Miss Fluorides.*' You can follow the progress of both these groups on facebook under both these names.

It is wonderful to see these green shoots of optimism beginning to sprout in Ireland. We are seeing a new generation of Irish citizens demanding - what 98% of the citizens within the rest of Europe expect and enjoy - access to safe non-fluoridated drinking water.

In addition membership of Irish anti fluoride social networking groups continues to rise with in the region of 10,000 members on various forums on facebook alone. In the meantime long time activists such as Walter Graham and Robert Pocock continue with their selfless efforts while others such as Steve Kerr and Terry Lawton, to name but a few, join the ranks of fluoride educators in raising awareness on this critical issue.

### **The push to fluoridate Northern Ireland**

However significant dangers lie ahead, the Minister for Health in Northern Ireland has been lobbied heavily by the public health authorities in the Republic of Ireland to introduce water fluoridation across the border. This has resulted in over 3500 people from Northern Ireland in a very short period of time joining an activist group on facebook called *No Fluoride in Northern Ireland*.

From a scientific point of view it is crucially important that fluoridation is not introduced into Northern Ireland as it provides clear population-based health evidence of how fluoridation is impacting the citizens of the Republic of Ireland. We live on the same island yet a comparison of the health statistics for both regions are astonishing. Not only are cancer rates up to 30% higher in the Republic for a wide range of cancers but the prevalence of diabetes is over 100% higher as is osteoporosis .

### **Since my report**

Since completing my report, which examined over 1200 scientific papers from 250 peer reviewed medical and scientific journals, my quest for knowledge continues and as a result of my work I have now been introduced thanks largely to FAN to a dedicated community of likeminded volunteers around the world. We collaborate on a daily basis sharing information and knowledge, for which I am most grateful.

I am no longer just one scientist struggling to master this complex issue but part of a worldwide community of activists and professionals sharing information for the betterment of all our communities.

I am also in contact on a weekly basis with every local elected politician throughout the country in addition to every county and city manager as well as every nationally elected representative in parliament, not to mention the Environmental Protection Agency, other State Departments in addition to environmental, health and consumer organisations.

Slowly we are making progress. Elected politicians from every political party as well as independents have raised concerns in the national parliament on water fluoridation. Local politicians across the nation are voicing concerns at local authority level demanding answers to questions and an end to the mandatory fluoridation.

Even the European Commission has informed me that they have recommended my report to the World Health Organization (WHO) as well as raising concerns with Member States regarding water fluoridation.

### **Fluoridation contributing to disease in Ireland**

From my research I have no doubt whatsoever that the fluoridation of drinking water is the single biggest contributor to the catastrophic disease burden prevalent in Ireland today, where we have one of the highest incidences in the world of cancer, diabetes, hypothyroidism, neurological disorders, cardiovascular disease, dental fluorosis and other medical ailments. In the scientific literature many of these diseases have been associated with exposure to fluoride compounds.

### **A worldwide effort**

2013 promises to be an eventful and exciting year in the struggle for human rights and environmental justice in Ireland and elsewhere. However, we must remember that this work cannot be left entirely to unpaid volunteers. If it is, we will not succeed. If we truly wish to succeed in this 'struggle against titans' as Dr. Waldbott referred to this battle in his remarkable book, we must adequately resource a professional support and networking team. For this purpose I ask that you support FAN either financially or in some other manner, and if you are lucky to have a national group in your country support them as well. In this way we all have a better chance of succeeding in our respective countries. Together we have to fight the lethargy of the media and academia –and the blind eyes of the medical profession – and get the information about fluoridation's dangers directly to the people in fluoridated communities worldwide.

In this digital age I am hopeful that the marvels of internet communication, social media and organizations such as FAN will finally set us free of the unnecessary burdens of water fluoridation. A new dawn of consciousness is coming, lets us all rise to the challenge for the sake of own health, our families and future generations.

A pdf copy of [Declan's report on fluoridation \(328 pages\)](#) can be viewed online.

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**Fluoridated Irish public betrayed by one-sided government spin.**

By Robert Pocock

*This article [first appeared](#) on the website *Ireland Against Fluoridation* on December 15, 2012.*

This week's unanimous censure by the Irish Supreme Court of its government's improper promotion of only one side of an issue simply highlights how individual citizens are kept in the dark on many risks that directly affect them, including those from fluoridating their drinking water.

For fifty years an Orwellian Ministry of Truth has propagated only supposed benefits to teeth while denying any risks, the result being that most citizens in Ireland still remain woefully misinformed about the risks of fluoridation.

Thanks to the internet however, the truth about these risks can now be readily accessed, with the result that citizens are at last realizing how they have been hoodwinked about fluoridation. They learn that like Ireland, other victims trusted the US Public Health Service (USPHS) on the issue. US dollars were also pumped in to other European countries to promote fluoridation, but the only ones to be taken in were Ireland and to a lesser extent, the UK (1).

The USPHS's push for a positive public perception of fluoride was nothing to do with public health but all to do with protecting several strategic military- industrial corporations from likely pollution litigation in the US. So what could reassure the fluoridation sceptics at home and abroad better than for the USPHS to publicly endorse its 'benefits'? Christopher Bryson's *The Fluoride Deception* unearths the truth, including the alarming implications for Ireland, the only country in Europe to introduce compulsory (no opt-out) state-wide treatment with this very same pollutant.

The Irish government's prime witness in the ensuing court case, Dr Harold Hodge was actually pushing the secret US PHS agenda but so plausible was this fluoride expert before Irish high court judge Kenny that Kenny cheerfully accepted 'the whole of his evidence'. Kenny disbelieved the opposing expert witnesses from Europe, South Africa and in particular Dr George Waldbott, the world's leading clinician on fluoride's toxic effects. Dr Hodge's assurances on the complete safety of fluoridation were of course entirely bogus, however the enormity of his betrayal of the Irish people is unlikely to ever emerge since access to his papers (some are still classified) has been denied.

Today's Irish government has learned nothing – all fluoridation spin emanates from the government-appointed and grandly titled *Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health*. Pointedly ignoring the European Commission's statement in Feb 2012 that '**People do not need fluoride for normal growth and development**' this agency which commands little public credibility is anything but independent:-

It has no representative from the very many Irish dentists opposing fluoridation. Its only legal expert Prof William Binchy never attends its meetings and it has been unable to engage a toxicologist. This is perhaps not surprising because what independent toxicologist could ever endorse as safe the ingestion of industrial fluorosilicates?

The national consumer interest is definitely not served by the membership of the chairman of Consumers Association of Ireland, Mr Michael Kilcoyne now vice-chairman of the expert body. Perhaps the absurdity of claiming to advocate consumer choice while also endorsing mandatory mass medication explains why this association is in terminal decline.

Neither *The Fluoride Deception* nor 2010's best book on fluoridation, *The Case Against Fluoride* by Paul Connett and others, have ever been reviewed by the Irish media. But Internet users can learn how Dr Connett's evidence (2) of Oct 2000 to the Fluoridation Forum was shamefully dismissed by Irish fluoridation promoters, including several who still operate under the moniker of the *Irish Expert Body on Fluorides and Health*.

At least internet users in Ireland, the UK and elsewhere can now see that the official Irish spin on fluoridation, like the recent flawed referendum claiming to protect Irish children, is blatantly unreliable and not in the public interest.

(1) ***Promotion of fluoridation.***

**During the 1950's and 1960's the United States Public Health Service gave MILLIONS of taxpayers dollars to Western European countries(including UK and Eire), and Australia, New Zealand and Canada in a huge push TO PROMOTE FLUORIDATION. Poster campaigns in hospitals, doctors and dentist's surgeries, libraries, schools, works canteens etc, proliferated UK and Eire institutions received AT LEAST the following sums:**

	1958	1960	1963
Eire	\$19,078	\$62,250	\$78,730
UK	\$232,035	\$900,048	\$2,751,215

**Currently Eire is approximately 73% fluoridated and the UK approximately 10% fluoridated mainly in the West Midlands and North East.**

**Source: Briefing paper by UK National Pure Water Association, April 1999.**

(2) <http://www.amazon.com/The-Case-Against-Fluoride-Hazardous/dp/1603582878>