



Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs
GPO: Box A11
Perth WA 6837

August 26, 2012

RE: Petition No 166 – Immediate Cessation of the Chlorination of the Busselton Water Supply

Dear Committee Members,

Please find following submission with respect to the above petition recently submitted to Parliament. This petition represents a significant response from our community with 969 signatures from children and 7232 signatures from adults in support of the petition. I have addressed issues raised in the petition as follows:

1. *Since the chlorination of our water supply there is significant distress, illness and injury to the community. Our community has enjoyed 106 years of chemical free water without ill effect and vehemently oppose Busselton Water (Board and Executive) imposing chlorine and other toxic chemicals on it under the guise of public health.*

I submit that the adverse health reactions to members of our community are directly linked to the introduction of Chlorine into the Busselton water supply.

I have personally witnessed numerous cases in which residents have begun experiencing skin conditions and other adverse conditions such as asthma responses that have occurred only since the introduction of Chlorine into the Busselton water supply. Residents have been unable to link these symptoms to any other cause. Coincidence is unlikely given the number of cases reported and the consistency of the reactions.

2. *Busselton Water's (BW) public comments that "This decision is too important for the community to decide" and its failure to involve the community in decisions related to the treatment of their water supply ignores the recommendations of the 2004 and subsequent 2011 Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. This stance: denies natural justice; withholds human rights; and contradicts the many international treaties enacted to protect individual's rights on matters impacting their health and wellbeing, treaties to which Australia is a signatory.*

I submit that insufficient weight has been placed upon the strength of the community's wishes with respect to the Chlorination of their water supply and that the community's voice has not been heard.

The Busselton community overwhelmingly rejected the proposal to disinfect Busselton's water supply through the use of Chlorine. This is evident through the large proportion of the resident population of Busselton signing previous petitions, along with the significant number of signatories to Petition no 166. As an Elected Member to the Council of the City of Busselton I must acknowledge the community's concerns and ask that you consider the significant response accordingly.

Busselton Water have previously stated that they failed in the execution of their public consultation and "could certainly have done things better" as stated by then BW Board Chairman, David Reid. In spite of this statement and other failures to properly consult, BW continued to implement the chlorination of the Busselton water supply.

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3. Your petitioners respectfully request the Legislative Council call on the Minister for Water to direct BW to immediately cease chlorination, reinstate the UV disinfection systems and recommence the previous disinfection schedule. We ask that this be done pending a Parliamentary Inquiry because since the chlorination of our water supply hundreds of people have medical conditions from ingestion of or exposure to the chlorinated water.

I submit that inadequate investigation and poor quality research has been conducted prior to BW's decision to implement the chlorination of Busselton's water supply. This has led to a poorly informed decision making process, resulting in the significant health impacts upon many consumers within the Busselton community.

4. We ask that the Parliamentary Inquiry investigation include:

a. the validity of a case study that detected Naegleria Fowleri in cooling ponds and downstream from a nuclear power plant in France as an appropriate comparison to Busselton's ground water and closed reticulation system as the underpinning justification that there is a high risk of the pathogen entering the water supply;

I submit that it simply cannot be suggested that merely the presence of Naegleria Lovaniensis indicates that Naegleria Fowleri will be found or is able to infiltrate Busselton's water supply. There is no valid basis to this assertion which has been repeatedly made by Busselton Water and consultants Hunter Water Australia (HWA).

b. the soundness of the risk assessment analysis, findings and reports of Consultants Hunter Water Australia;

I submit that there is insufficient relationship between the nature of Busselton's water and the samples collected and referred to by Pelandakis and Pernin. This questions the soundness of the RA assessment analysis and recommendations of consultants Hunter Water Australia. I submit that the adoption of HWA's recommendation with respect to Busselton's water supply is therefore inappropriate.

c. the merit of replacing the UV systems with chlorination plants when many pathogens are chlorine resistant;

I submit that there are other options available that have not been adequately considered that will not have the negative health implications that the recent introduction of chlorine into Busselton's water supply have had upon members of our community. I submit that the present chlorination of the water supply is immediately halted and that further investigation of other options takes place.

d. the merit in using a disinfection remedy to rectify possible engineering hazards in the reticulation system;

I submit that the existing reticulation infrastructure has not been maintained adequately by Busselton Water, and that the disinfection of the system by the introduction of chlorine does nothing to remedy ageing infrastructure. I submit that the our community should not have to suffer the immediate and long-term health effects caused by the chlorination of the water supply in an effort to cover up poor management of our water distribution and reticulation infrastructure.

Yours sincerely



Cr David Binks
Councillor – City of Busselton

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