

# Council approves fluoridation

Fluoridation

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After more than five hours of contentious, conflicting testimony Tuesday, the **WATSONVILLE** City Council agreed to fluoridate the city's water.

At least 100 people overflowed the Council Chamber into the hallway, prompting one opponent, Gary Arnold of Santa Cruz, to demand the meeting be canceled. His shouts did post-

pone the session briefly while city staff consulted with the fire and police departments.

Arnold's repeated interruptions caused Mayor Chuck Carter to warn him he could be thrown out of the room.

Dr. Barry Staley, director of Dientes!, said the need for fluoride is great. Dientes! provides free services to students in the district, and Staley says at least two students in each class need urgent dental care — not to mention those needing regular treatment.

"These are the statistics we see in Third

World countries," Staley said.

Members of Citizens for Safe Drinking Water, including the group's director, Jeff Green of San Diego, also mounted a 30-minute presentation.

More than 40 people spoke, with opinion almost evenly split. Most of the proponents were health-care or social-service professionals, while opponents focused on civil rights, safety and environmental issues.

Opponents often were raucous, prompting Councilman Richard de La Paz to ask that one

man "shut his mouth."

"The issue of dueling scientists is problematic," said Dr. George Wolfe, a former county health officer.

In the end, only council members Betty Bobeda and Judy Doering-Nielson voted against a motion to start a fluoridation program. Both wanted to consider additional evidence presented during the meeting.

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