

Fluoride issue making its way to courtroom

Fluoridation
Dental groups join the state in lawsuit

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The legal battle over the State of California's order to fluoridate Watsonville's water supply is making its way through the legal obstacle course and a case management conference held earlier this week produced little in terms of new developments.

"The meeting was basically about scheduling more meetings," said Nick Bulaich of the Watsonville Chapter of Citizens for Safe Drinking Water.

One new development that did occur was that the California Dental Association and its subsidiary charity, the California Dental Association Foundation were allowed to join the lawsuit, according to Allan Smith, Watsonville city attorney.

The dental organization has joined the state's side arguing that fluoride should be present in Watsonville's water, even though a local ballot initiative struck down Watsonville City's attempt to collect on a grant offered from the state to fluoridate the water.

Fluoride has been hailed as one of the 10 greatest public health achievements of the 20th century by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, but critics believe that the chemical can lead to an increase in the risk of contracting cancer and or other health problems.

The next case management conference is scheduled for Nov. 14 and the lawsuit is expected to go to trial early next year.