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# Scotts Valley city attorney will probe pollution claim

The Scotts Valley City Council has directed its city attorney to investigate a charge that the Si-Fab Corp. has dumped illegal amounts of flouride into the sewer system.

The City Council met in closed session earlier this week and decided to direct City Attorney Ray Haight to review all city records to determine whether civil or misdemeanor criminal charges should be filed against the Si-Fab, a semiconductor manufacturing firm located on Janus Way.

The firm's vice president of operations, Richard McCracken, has maintained readings of flouride levels taken by the city do not make sense and do not correspond to the company's readings.

The city readings show the flouride concentration to be too high and in violation of the City Code, which spells out how much toxic waste can be dumped into the wastewater system without interfering with the sewage treatment process.

The point of discharge into the sewer remained capped off this morning, according to a company spokesman.

In the meantime, Paul Reith, the city's sewage treatment plant supervisor, said at this point the plant is "not experiencing a problem."

If toxic substances enter the treatment plant at an excessive rate, the aerobic

bacteria used to break down the sewage is killed off. Once that happens, the treatment plant is not operating efficiently, and wastes must be pumped more and more often to keep sludge from escaping into the effluence pipeline to the ocean.

The increased amount of pumping is a costly effort.

City Attorney Haight is expected to report back to the Council within ten days.