INTRODUCTION

• Tennessee has a long history of community water fluoridation peaking at 96% of the state’s population.
• Recent rollbacks in mostly small communities has dropped that to around 92%.
• Many times these decisions were being made behind closed doors with little outside input.
• Something needed to be done.
LEGISLATIVE EFFORTS

• In 2009 the Tennessee Dental Association worked with State Representative Dr. Bob Ramsey, a dentist from Maryville, to introduce a notification bill.

• It passed a Senate Committee and the Senate with a 32-0 vote but faltered in a house committee chaired by an anti-fluoridationist physician, State Representative Joey Hensley who opposed it.

• The same bill was reintroduced and passed in 2011.

• It was amended to read “general mailing” instead of a newspaper notice per county.
SENATE BILL 2987
By Barnes

HOUSE BILL 3374
By Ramsey

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 221, relative to drinking water.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-221-708, is amended by adding the following language as a new, appropriately designated subsection:

( ) Any public water system or waterworks system as defined in this chapter which discontinues the fluoridation of its water supply shall give written notice to the department of environment and conservation and the department of health at least ten (10) days prior to the date of such discontinuance. Such system shall publish notice of the discontinuance in a newspaper of general circulation in each county served by the system at least thirty (30) days prior to the discontinuance.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.
HOUSE BILL 976
By Ramsey

SENATE BILL 1056
By Barnes

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 68, Chapter 221, relative to drinking water.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 68-221-708, is amended by adding the following as a new subsection:

( ) Any public water system or waterworks system as defined in this title, which determines to cease fluoridation of its water supply, shall notify the department of environment and conservation and the department of health of its decision within ten (10) days of the decision. The water system shall additionally give public notice to its customers in the next general mailing, such mailing to be thirty (30) days prior to discontinuance.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.
LIVE & LEARN

• The utilities circumvented the intent of the law by giving the prescribed notice before discontinuing fluoridation but not 30 days before the decision was made and the vote taken.

• In 2012 new language was added in a bill to amend the existing law that clarified the notice shall take place before a vote. In a compromise that was acceptable to all, it was also to include verbiage that required notice 30 days prior to a vote that was to be taken when fluoridation was permanently initiated or ceased.

• Finally, a section was included which required notification when a water system was in non-compliance. This allowed for a genuine mechanical problem, etc.
Tenn. Code Ann. § 68-221-708

TENNESSEE CODE ANNOTATED
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*** Current through the 2014 Regular Session and amendments approved at the November 4, 2014 General Election ***

Title 68 Health, Safety and Environmental Protection
Environmental Protection
Chapter 221 Water and Sewerage
Part 7 Tennessee Safe Drinking Water Act of 1983


68-221-708. Notification to public and regulatory agencies.

(a) Whenever a public water system is not in compliance with the current primary drinking water regulations, the supplier shall inform the division of such noncompliance as soon as practicable, but not later than twenty-four (24) hours after learning of the noncompliance.

(b) The supplier shall also give such public notification as may be prescribed by regulations.

(c) Any public water system or waterworks system, as defined in this title, which determines to initiate or permanently cease fluoridation of its water supply, shall notify the department of environment and conservation and the department of health of its intention thirty (30) days prior to any vote. The water system shall additionally give public notice to its customers in a general mailing at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting at which said vote shall take place.

STRATEGIES

• Know your policy makers and find a champion or two.
• Control your legislation.
• Pay attention to fiscal & budget implications.
• Work with state or local health departments and the commissioners/directors.
• Work with other healthcare providers/institutions.
• Work with local or state dental societies.
• Collaborate with state Medicaid director on cost issues.
• Collaborate with third party insurance regarding cost containment.
• Use the ADA’s Fluoridation Facts and other resources.
ROADBLOCKS

- Science does not always trump emotional perspective.
- The Internet: Anti-fluoridationist’s bully pulpit.
- Growing sources of anti-F science albeit questionable.
- Changing political climate and anti-government sentiments.
- Difficulty gathering stakeholders outside dentistry.
- Failure to focus on the middle ground and not the hardcore.
- Creativity of utility boards whose mindset is to stop fluoridation.
OLIVER SPRINGS WATER BOARD
P.O. BOX 614
OLIVER SPRINGS, TN 37840

RETURN SERVICE
REQUESTED
11-06-14 6:30PM
DISCUSSION & VOTE ON
FLOODIGATION IN THE
TOWNS WATER SUPPLY
171 PHILLIPS /FREELS
JAMES HORTON

PLEASE BRING THIS ENTIRE BILL TO OFFICE
OR MAIL THIS STUB WITH YOUR PAYMENT

ACCOUNT NO. 003 - 11060-01 NET AMOUNT 27.76
DATE OF BILL 10/01/14 SAVE THIS AMOUNT 2.00
PAY GROSS AFTER 10/16/14 GROSS AMOUNT 29.76

JAMES HORTON
106 CARSON LN
OAK RIDGE TN 37830
SUCCESS?

• Are we better off than we were? Yes!
• Is it a little early to tell? Yes!
• Has it made a difference? Yes!
• Will it be a panacea? No!
THANK YOU!!

Leon E. Stanislav, DDS

Stan4Bike@aol.com
931-648-0232 office
931-624-3558 mobile