

Letters to the editor

Whatever happened to judging the evidence?

THE article "Councillors clash over fluoridation options" (ODT, 14.10.08) has inaccuracies. Under the heading "Fluoride facts" it is stated that fluoride is a "naturally occurring chemical". The fluoride added to water is a form of sodium fluoride. It is not naturally occurring and is a byproduct of the aluminium industry. It is a highly poisonous substance and quite different in composition from calcium fluoride, which occurs naturally.

I am astounded to find out that Cr Michael Guest has been a lawyer and a judge, particularly in view of his statements regarding fluoridation and the fact that deliberation by a judge means viewing all evidence before arriving at a conclusion. It is suggested that the American study by

Dr Elise Bassin in April 2001, at the prestigious Harvard School of Dental Research, be read by Cr Guest. He might find out that "snake oil merchants" are anything but when the doctor proves beyond any doubt whatsoever that boys aged from 5 to 10 who drink the "normal" amount of fluoridated water are seven times more likely to develop bone cancer (osteosarcoma) from the ages of 10 to 19.

Ian Morgan
Oamaru

[Abridged]

YOU reported (ODT, 14.10.08) that Cr Michael Guest stated at a Dunedin City Council services committee meeting that those who opposed

fluoridation were "akin to quacks and snake oil merchants".

As a ratepayer and one of a growing number of citizens who are pro-choice concerning mass medication via our water supply without proper consultation, I am offended, as are others, to be labelled thus by Cr Guest.

Many consider the known industrial waste — fluoride — to be the real "snake oil", peddled by indoctrinated "quacks". Cr Guest is switching the blame from them to the concerned ratepayers.

His rude outburst was an insult to citizens, who are entitled to voice their concerns.

Evan Sadler
Outram

[Abridged]