

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 17, 2021
TO: Amy Demboski, Municipal Manager
FROM: Mark A. Corsentino, P.E., General Manager
SUBJECT: Request for AWWU Written Response to Assembly Questions re Fluoride

AWWU's written responses to the Assembly's fluoride inquiries directed to the administration during the Enterprise Committee Meeting are provided below.

If I can provide any further information or clarification, please do not hesitate to ask at your earliest convenience.

1. Please describe the concerns that employees have raised relating to fluoride in the past.

The Eklutna Water Treatment Facility employees' general sentiment is that they feel safe using all the proper PPE for loading fluoride; but, if given a choice, they would rather not handle it. It has been expressed amongst operators that after loading fluoride with the proper PPE you may experience a chalky taste in your mouth or eye and nose irritation on occasion while cleaning up post loading process.

2. Were these complaints in writing, or just verbal?

Verbal communication amongst Eklutna operators about this topic during general conversation is all that Eklutna staff is aware of.

3. Have there been any changes in the way fluoride is being used considering the concerns raised by employees over the years?

Over the years, Eklutna staff has tried to limit fluoride dust in operational mix/feed areas by regular washdowns, along with sealing joints and floor penetrations in the hopper feed chute. In addition, several years ago, there were some batches of fluoride that originated in China that was a more powdery product and caused issues with the feed system equipment. Subsequently, that vendor did not bid on the fluoride contract and a different supplier from Europe provided a more granular product.

4. Has there been any complaints or concerns raised with OSHA relating to fluoride?

Per AWWU OSHA 300 logs, on file in MOA's Risk Management, there have not been any recordable or reportable complaints or concerns raised with OSHA relating to fluoride.

5. What PPE/safety protocols are used by AWWU when handling fluoride?

The Eklutna staff uses the following PPE and safety precautions during fluoride hopper loading:

- Rubber gloves with extended arm cuffs
- Coveralls and apron; Tyvek suits are available for use also
- 3M Versaflo PAPR (powered air purifying respirator) with appropriate filtration, helmet, and face shield.
- Exhaust fans and proper ventilation are used in the fluoride hopper loading room, and the mix/feed room.

