

LETTERS

FDA case in 1945 indicated the risk in fluorides

With the water fluoridation controversy surfacing again in our area, I think your readers would be interested to learn about the famous beer case that was brought against the Commonwealth Brewing Co. (Springfield, Mass.) by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration back in 1945.

At the time of one of his inspections, Cyril C. Sullivan, former chief inspector of the FDA for New England, detected a small amount of fluorides being added to beer and ale as a preservative. That was used to stop after-fermentation in the bottle. The amount was so small that it could scarcely be detected by chemical analysis of the product, being less than 0.5 part per million.

The case came up for trial and the court and jury found the defendants guilty. They held that the offense was of such a serious character that the defendant corporation of Springfield was fined \$5,000; the defendant fined personally \$5,000. In addition, a jail sentence of six months was imposed and suspended. The defendant was placed on probation for a period of three years.

When drinking water is fluoridated artificially, one part per million of fluoride is added. In the above-mentioned case, less than 0.5 part per million of fluoride was being added to the beer — about half the strength used to fluoridate water supplies.

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