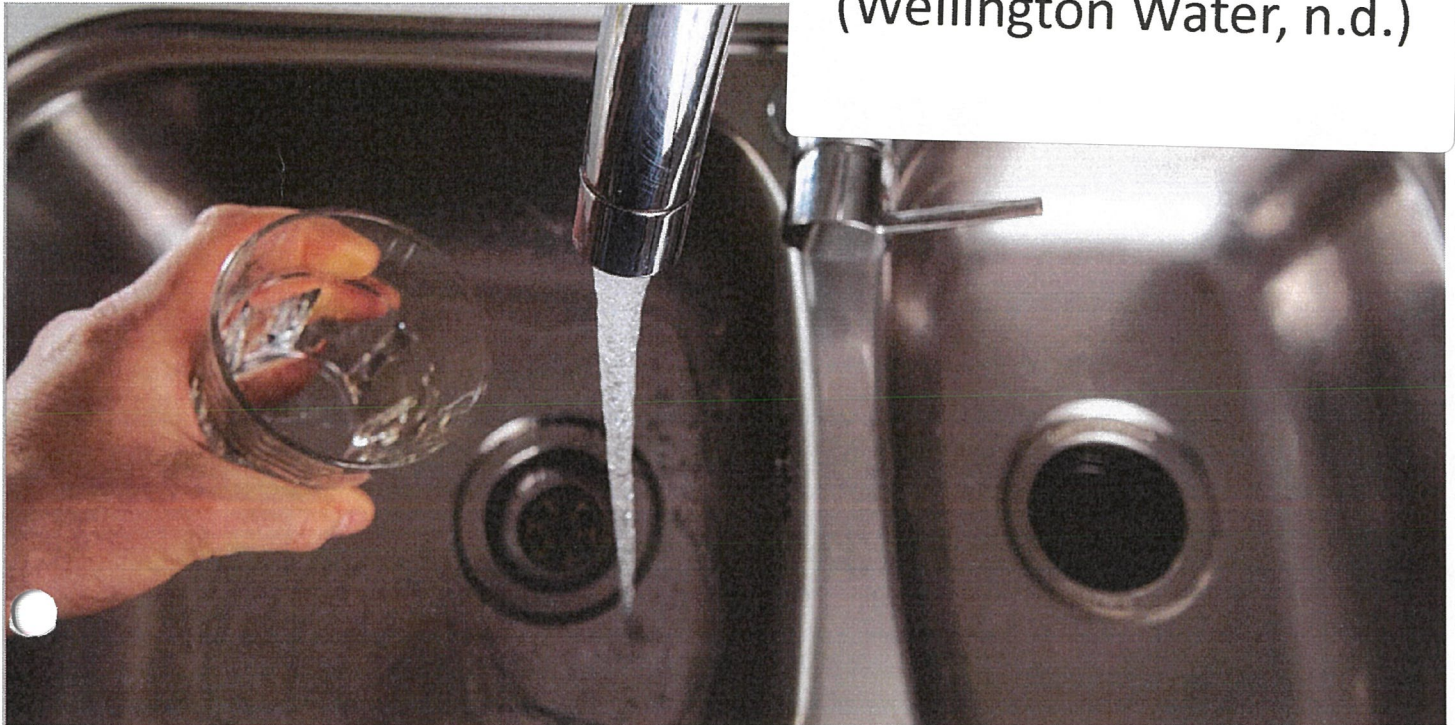


(Wellington Water, n.d.)



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## Fluoride independent inquiry 2022

P. In 2021, we stopped the fluoride facilities at the Te Mārua Water Treatment Plant in May and at the Gear Island Water Treatment Plant in November due to operational and health and safety issues, which meant we could not guarantee that we could add fluoride safely. At the time we didn't tell anyone we did this, and we apologise for that, and the concern caused.

In March 2022, we announced that the fluoride facilities at Te Mārua and Gear Island had been stopped. However, we provided people with an incorrect date for when we stopped fluoridation at the plants, which we corrected the next day. Again, we acknowledge that this falls short of the expectations of our customers and communities, and we apologise for the concern caused.

Since then, we have worked at pace to safely restore fluoride at the Te Mārua and Gear Island Water Treatment plants. To do this we constructed two new fluoride facilities at Te Mārua and Gear Island and in September 2022 these facilities were operational and reliably fluoridating the drinking water within the Ministry of Health target range.

### Independent Inquiry

**5th** I fully understand why the fluoride facilities were turned off at the plants and why our customers, community, Councils and our Board were not told of this in a timely and accurate manner, the



## Wellington Water Board commissioned an independent inquiry in March 2022.

The inquiry was undertaken by Martin Jenkins and completed in late June 2022. The Board received and accepted all the inquiry's recommendations in early July 2022. Since then all the recommendations have been implemented.

In November 2022, the inquiry was formally closed out by the Board.

### Inquiry findings



### Inquiry recommendations



### Implementing the recommendations



The inquiry also reviewed a technical report on the levels of fluoridation at our water treatment plants for the past five years. A copy of that report can be read [here](#).

The full report of the Independent Inquiry into cessation of water fluoridation by Wellington Water report can be read [here](#).

## Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act Requests

We received a number of Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act requests for fluoride, and we have published our responses on our [Official Information Act Responses page](#).

## Timeline of key events



P.

**16 March**

Stakeholders and public were informed that fluoride had been stopped at Gear Island and Te Marua Water Treatment Plants



**17 March**

Wellington Water Board launches an independent inquiry into fluoride



**April - June**

Wellington Water implements fluoride assurance framework



**11 April**

Project to restore fluoride formally commences



**26 May**

Greater Wellington Regional Council approves funding for fluoride project



**21 June**

Fluoride inquiry completed



**8 July**

Public release of independent inquiry findings and recommendations and Wellington Water's response



**1 July**

MoH's mandate for fluoridation comes into effect



**July - October**

Wellington Water's programme of work to implement inquiry recommendations

**September**

Fluoridation will be restored at Te Marua and Gear Island Water Treatment Plants

P.



### 1 October

Implementation of recommendations will be completed. Close out of inquiry.



## Fluoride updates and media releases

We have kept the public up to date throughout our work to restore fluoride at the Te Mārua and Gear Island Water Treatment Plants and to improve the reliability of fluoridation at the Wainuiomata and Waterloo Water Treatment Plants. This was done via [weekly project updates](#).

We also issued a series of media releases for key announcements and milestones. See below for our media releases.

- Fluoride inquiry concluded, 18 Nov 2022
- New fluoride facilities now operating and fluoridating at the right levels, 29 Sep 2022
- Wellington Water to start testing new fluoride facilities, 29 Jul 2022
- P. • [Release of Wellington Water Fluoridation Inquiry, 8 Jul 2022](#)
- Resumption of fluoridation at Te Mārua and Gear Island Water Treatment Plants, 3 Jun 2022
- Update on Wellington Water fluoridation inquiry, 27 May 2022
- Wellington Water updates on work to restore fluoride to Te Mārua and Gear Island Water Treatment Plants, 8 Apr 2022
- Scope and terms of reference set for Wellington Water fluoridation inquiry, 4 Apr 2022
- Wellington Water provides more detail on plan to get fluoride back in the drinking water in the Wellington metropolitan area, 18 Mar 2022
- Board of Wellington Water announces independent inquiry on fluoridation of drinking water, 17 Mar 2022
- Wellington's drinking water fluoridation facilities are aging and in need of repair, 16 Mar 2022