

Seven Days - Letter to the Editor

DEFENDING CHLORAMINE

I want to correct factual errors and misperceptions reported in the Seven Days article, "Activists, Lawmakers Criticize CDC's Chloramine Report" [[News, January 23](#)].

The Vermont Department of Health has painstakingly, methodically and steadily investigated the use of monochloramine to disinfect drinking water since the switchover to monochloramine by the Champlain Water District in April 2006. Let's set the record straight about our actions:

Our toxicology and medical epidemiology experts have searched for and reviewed all available research on the subject to date, even to the point of having two studies translated from German. We have continued to press EPA and CDC for emerging scientific studies to help in understanding the concerns of some residents and anti-chloramine groups. We have met multiple times with stakeholders, physicians and individuals, surveyed area health-care providers, and last fall organized the CDC/EPA meeting and home visits, and worked with the Agency of Natural Resources to host a meeting on disinfection byproducts.

To date, we have found no credible evidence to show that the use of monochloramines to disinfect public drinking water is a threat to public health. To the contrary, use of chloramines is considered a safer alternative to chlorine to reduce known harmful disinfection byproducts.

Of the approximately 68,000 Champlain Water District customers, fewer than 80 people — rather than the 250 people reported in Seven Days — have contacted the Health Department about personal health or medical concerns related to monochloramine.

The Health Department will now step up its public information efforts with expanded resources on our website at healthvermont.gov — and by partnering with Vermont 2-1-1 to provide an information line for people to call with their questions.

Also by calling 2-1-1, anyone who has a personal health or medical concern related to chloramines can be connected to one of our epidemiology public health nurse experts at the Health Department and referred to a medical specialist, if needed.

I continue to be very concerned about the partial and inaccurate information that anti-chloramine groups are presenting, and ask consumers to beware.

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Moffatt is the Vermont
Commissioner of Health.