

THE INFORMED DEMOCRAT OF SWFL



County Commission and Public Health

March 1, 2025

By Joyce Campana

In February, the Lee County Commission took up two measures that impact public health. At their February 4 meeting, they decided to end fluoridation in the county's water. Even though water fluoridation is endorsed by the American Dental Association and has been recognized by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) as one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century, it has been under attack by opponents including Joseph Ladapo, Florida State Surgeon General, and the new HHS head, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. both of whom have a history of supporting quack science. The Commission followed their lead and voted unanimously to stop fluoridating water. Counties that have stopped fluoridation have seen cavities increase. Two weeks after the County Commission's action, the City Council of Fort Myers (which has a separate water supply) agreed to follow the ADA and continue water fluoridation. We should be able to compare the results!

At the February 18 meeting, the Commission discussed several issues around liquid and solid waste disposal. The Commission turned back concerns about pollutants in county waste disposal raised by members of the Colusa group, the local chapter of the Sierra Club. That group charged that the Lee County Waste-to-Energy facility could violate EPA rules for public incinerators that burn sewage. When trash burns, mercury is released and the impact on human health is extreme. Separately, speakers raised concerns about the presence of PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) in the leachate set to be injected into a well at the Hendry County Landfill and called for transparency about PFAS levels. The Commission went ahead with a proposal to accept \$60,000 in revenue by disposing of the County's non-hazardous liquid waste through the County's leachate disposal system.

Want to keep up with issues like these? Attend the next Commissioners meeting on March 4 at 9:30AM; or email the Commission Watch Group with questions or comments at leecommissionerswatchgroup@gmail.com.

Joyce Campana reports for the Lee Commissioner Watch Group.