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# California State Senate

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**ADAM B. SCHIFF**  
TWENTY-FIRST DISTRICT

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October 31, 2000

Dennis A. Dickerson, Executive Director  
Los Angeles Regional Water Quality Control Board  
320 W. 4<sup>th</sup> St., Suite 200  
Los Angeles, CA 90013

Dear Mr. Dickerson:

Thank you for your letter inviting me to attend the workshop regarding chromium groundwater contamination on November 13. Regrettably, my schedule will not permit my attendance. I do have a continuing and strong interest in this subject, and I would appreciate any information or materials your office could send to me that are produced as a result of the workshop.

In follow-up to the joint legislative hearing regarding this issue held on October 24, I am pleased to report that I have called for a definitive federal cancer test of chromium 6 to be performed. I have also called on Governor Gray Davis to direct the State Department of Health Services to convey to local water agencies statewide the State of California's view that a lower permitted level for chromium in drinking water is in the immediate health interest of the public while further regulations are being developed.

I believe there is sufficient evidence that chromium 6 is a likely carcinogen when ingested in drinking water based on testimony provided by leading scientific researchers at the hearing. In light of that evidence, we should take action now to reduce the levels of chromium 6 in the water, and prevent further chromium 6 from leaching into the water supply, while concurrently pursuing further research.

Currently, the California Department of Health Services permits a maximum of 50 parts per billion of chromium in drinking water. However, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment has issued a "public health goal" proposing the permitted levels be reduced to 2.5 parts per billion to protect the public health, a level that has been exceeded in some tap water tests conducted by Los Angeles County.

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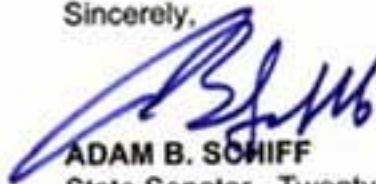


Together with Dr. Joseph R. Landolph, Associate Professor, USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center, I have written to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, to urge that hexavalent chromium be tested to definitively determine whether it is carcinogenic to humans when ingested in drinking water. Such rigorous bioassay tests performed under the National Toxicology Program are considered the "gold standard" in the scientific community. This data will help improve confidence in current calculations of the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment "public health goal" for orally administered hexavalent chromium.

You may be interested to know that as a result of past National Toxicology Program testing, methylene chloride, used to decaffeinate coffee, has been replaced by a water process; dichlorvos, used for flea collars for pets, was barred from this use; and benzene, a gasoline additive, is no longer used in consumer products because of evidence that it can cause cancer.

Thank you for taking the time to communicate with me regarding this important matter. If ever I may be of assistance, or if you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact my district office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Schiff', is written over the typed name.

**ADAM B. SCHIFF**  
State Senator - Twenty-first District

ABS/ph