

Toxic Waste Becomes Product for Two Bits

By Valerie Meehan

WASILLA – One hundred pounds of slightly soggy fluoride were sold to the city of Palmer this week by the city of Wasilla. The price? 25 cents.

Wasilla originally wanted to give away the fluoride, since it is not putting it in its water anymore. But a state official told the city if the chemical was not sold, it could be classified as a hazardous waste by the federal government. To forestall that possible complication, city officials charged Palmer a quarter. The chemical was transported to its new home Thursday.

Department of Environmental Conservation field officer Joe LeBeau said Thursday that according to federal regulations: “If Wasilla gives it away and then Palmer doesn’t use it it’s a hazardous waste.”

“If they sell it, it’s a product. If they give it away, it’s a hazardous waste,”

LeBeau said.

Wasilla city officials stopped fluoridating city water Wednesday, following a 6-1 city council decision Tuesday Night. City Councilwoman Pat Hjellen was the dissenting vote.

In an advisory ballot Oct. 2, Wasilla voters vetoed fluoridation 261-250.

Also at Tuesday’s meeting, the council voted to put the issue of fluoridation before the voters next October.

Frontiersman (Alaska) Oct. 13, 1984

Fluoride Sold for a Quarter

Our Mat-Su Bureau

WASILLA - Wasilla is 25 cents richer and fluoride-free.

The city sold its remaining fluoride to Palmer for a quarter of a dollar this week after the city council here voted to remove the chemical from the city’s water system. Palmer water is fluoridated and has the same fluoride injection system that Wasilla did.

Wasilla had looked at various alternatives for getting rid of about a two-month supply of the toxic waste that is used as a tooth decay preventative before offering it to Palmer.

The council agreed to remove the fluoride after the public called for an end to the program in an advisory vote last week.

Anchorage Daily News Oct. 13, 1984

Councilman Fights Against Fluoridation

WASILLA - City Councilman Darell Welsh said he plans to move “as soon as humanly possible” to halt fluoridation of the Wasilla water supply.

Welsh led the fight that resulted in a 249-240 advisory vote on Oct. 2 against continued fluoridation. He has long opposed the chemical additive in the water, and once resigned as city utilities manager (water supt.) rather than participate in fluoridation here.