

18 July 2007

Reference: LSB/323

Dear Interested Party

**Comments Sought On Proposed Draft European Regulation on Fluoride Removal From Natural Mineral Water Using Activated Alumina**

We have recently received a draft copy of new legislation establishing criteria for permitting treatment of natural mineral water to remove fluoride with activated alumina (attached) and we are seeking comments on it from stakeholders.

We would welcome any comments on this draft legislation and particularly on the following issues:

- 1) *p.1, Recital (2)*: Given that natural mineral waters are characterised by their composition, is it acceptable to allow treatment to further reduce fluoride where the concentration is already legally acceptable (i.e. at or below 5 mg/L)?
- 2) *p.3, Article 3*: The current proposed labelling for bottled water which has been treated with activated alumina to remove fluoride is “water subject to an authorised adsorption technique”. Is this sufficiently clear to let the consumer know how the natural mineral water has been treated?

This paper was discussed at a meeting of the European Commission Natural Mineral Waters Working Group on 12 July, but was not circulated early enough to allow consultation with stakeholders before the meeting.

The attached draft was discussed at the Working Group meeting, during which several suggestions were made for amendments. The Commission will circulate a revised version to Member States in the coming weeks, and once received this will also be immediately circulated to Interested Parties.

Please note that no Impact Assessment has been produced as the information we have is that UK producers already meet the appropriate fluoride limit and would therefore not need to use this treatment. If, however, you believe that this amendment will result in a significant impact we would welcome your comments and evidence including evidence on costs.

Due to the short timeframe for responding to the European Commission, can you please send any comments to me by **17 August 2007**.

For Information: Metal Oxide Treatment (Mn and Fe based)

The Agency anticipates that the Commission will also be producing a similar Regulation to that attached on the use of metal oxides for treating natural mineral water and spring water to remove manganese, iron and arsenic. If you would be interested in receiving future circulations as this issue develops, please let me know.

Yours sincerely

Paul Nunn  
Food Standards Agency

*Attached:*

- Circulation List
- Draft COMMISSION REGULATION (EC) No .../.. of [...] Commission Regulation establishing the conditions for using aluminium oxide for the removal of fluoride from natural mineral waters and spring waters.

**Interested Parties Circulation List:**

ADAS

BOTTLED WATER COOLER ASSOCIATION (BWCA)

BRITISH RETAIL CONSORTIUM (BRC)

BRITISH SOFT DRINKS ASSOCIATION (BSDA)

CAMPDEN & CHORLEYWOOD FOOD R. A.

FEDERATION OF SMALL BUSINESSES

FOOD AND DRINK FEDERATION

FOOD COMMISSION

FOODAWARE

LABORATORY OF THE GOVERNMENT CHEMIST

LACORS

LEATHERHEAD FOOD INTERNATIONAL RA

NATIONAL CONSUMER COUNCIL

NATIONAL CONSUMER FEDERATION

PROVISION TRADE FEDERATION

SMALL BUSINESS SERVICE

SUSTAIN - THE ALLIANCE FOR BETTER FOOD AND FARMING

THE FORUM OF PRIVATE BUSINESS

THE NATURAL MINERAL WATER INFORMATION SERVICE

TRADING STANDARDS INSTITUTE

WATER UK

WHICH?

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