

Fact Sheet

Who Is Paul Connett and the Fluoride Action Network?

- Paul Connett is the leading spokesman of the Fluoride Action Network (FAN), a group based in Binghamton, N.Y. FAN's website [promotes](#) a conspiracy theory linking community water fluoridation with the atomic bomb scientists of World War II. This conspiracy theory ignores the long history of research into fluoride's cavity-prevention impact that has been [traced to 1874](#). Connett also has [encouraged](#) conspiracy theories about the 9-11 terrorist attacks.
- Connett and FAN misrepresent studies and cite others that are not relevant to the practice of fluoridation. A newspaper in New York State investigated the allegations made by Connett and [reported](#): "He often relies on studies of fluoride use in other countries, where concentrations are significantly higher. One of Connett's main assertions, that fluoride is a dangerous, unregulated industrial waste byproduct, is disputed by public health professionals and was examined by PolitFact.com, which found the assertion [false](#)."
- FAN has a track record of circulating misleading or irrelevant information. In 2003, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) [evaluated](#) research documents that FAN submitted to the agency. The EPA found that most of these documents were flawed in methodology, data collection or other important areas.
- Connett and FAN have allied themselves with people who promote discredited or unproven views of health and medicine. Connett [praised](#) John Yiamouyiannis as "a man of true honor and integrity" years after Yiamouyiannis had co-written [a book](#) falsely claiming that HIV does *not* cause AIDS. In 2011, FAN [joined](#) an alliance that includes an anti-vaccination group.
- FAN has posted various false or misleading messages [on the web](#). In 2011, FAN made a [false statement](#) about the Pew Charitable Trusts, prompting the foundation to formally request a correction. A New Zealand scientist who reviewed an August 2015 fluoride presentation by Connett [found](#) it to be "full of scientific misrepresentations and distortions."
- One of FAN's leading [financial supporters](#), Dr. Joseph Mercola, has criticized vaccinations and [promoted](#) a former Italian doctor who claims that cancer is a fungus that can be cured with baking soda. Dr. Mercola sells a variety of health-related products or devices on his website, and the U.S. Food & Drug Administration has sent him [multiple letters](#), warning him to stop making inappropriate claims or cease promoting products that "are not generally recognized as safe and effective" for the conditions cited by Dr. Mercola.
- Connett recently [suggested](#) that Scotland's [Childsmile](#) program is a better way to reduce tooth decay without water fluoridation. Yet his suggestion ignores three key points:
 - Unlike fluoridation, Childsmile does nothing to reduce adults' rate of tooth decay.
 - The annual per-child cost of Childsmile is 73 times higher than the annual per-child cost of fluoridated water.
 - Although health officials applaud the impact of Childsmile, the British Dental Association's Scottish chapter has [urged](#) local officials to adopt fluoridation programs that "would complement" the Childsmile.