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News

Supes question effects of chloramine

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Concerns about the potential health effects of chloramine in local drinking water has prompted two county supervisors to seek the opinion of the state's top medical advisory panel.

Board of Supervisors President Mark Church and Supervisor Rich Gordon will present a resolution to the full board Tuesday calling on the California Conference of Local Health Officers to take a formal position on the safety of chloramine. The group is a coalition of county medical officials from across the state that makes policy recommendations on public health matters.

"Serious health concerns have been raised about the effects of using chloramine in our drinking water. At this time, the full extent of the potentially harmful effects is not known," Church said.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which approved the use of chloramine as a substitute for chlorine in February, has maintained that the chemical is safe for drinking. Still, some people have blamed chloramine for allergic reactions, or cited studies suggesting it may be carcinogenic in high doses.

A subcommittee of the California Conference of Local Health Officers will consider the matter in late January.