

ILLINOIS POLLUTION CONTROL BOARD
February 16, 1978

CITY OF CRYSTAL LAKE,)
)
) Petitioner,)
)
) v.) PCB 77-332
)
) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION)
) AGENCY,)
)
) Respondent.)

OPINION AND ORDER OF THE BOARD (by Mr. Dumelle):

This case comes before the Board as a Petition for a Variance from the drinking water standard for barium. Petitioner claims that it would suffer hardship if it was required to comply with the 1.0 mg/l standard because compliance would be expensive and unnecessary to protect public health. The Agency filed a Recommendation which stated that although the costs associated with compliance were not excessive, there wasn't enough data on health hazards from ingesting barium to justify the necessary expense.

On November 22, 1974 the Board adopted comprehensive Regulations on the quality of drinking water from public water supplies in Illinois. A standard of 1.0 mg/l as a twelve month running average was adopted as the maximum concentration for barium. This figure was selected after an analysis of evidence on health effects and economic and technical feasibility. January 1, 1978 was chosen as the date for compliance with this standard. Within one month of the compliance deadline, Petitioner requested relief without any stated intention of ever achieving the standard. In the meantime on June 24, 1977 the USEPA issued Regulations which require immediate compliance with the same 1.0 mg/l standard for barium in drinking water. The Board presently lacks the authority to grant relief from this Federal standard.

Petitioner has referred to a study on the relationship between cardiovascular morbidity and barium levels in drinking water. Since this study has not been completed, Petitioner feels it should not have to pay any attention to promulgated and effective Board and Federal Regulations. This attitude is puzzling particularly since the required treatment costs of 8.4 cents per 1000 gallons has not been shown to be excessive. Petitioner points out that if the barium requirement is met, it will encounter additional problems from corrosion of its delivery system, and its finished water will be softer and therefore more harmful to pipes and possibly to health. While these arguments are interesting, they are not relevant in a variance proceeding which presumes ultimate compliance or a showing of disastrous economic effects. We therefore deny the variance.

ORDER

It is the Order of the Pollution Control Board that Petitioner's request for a Variance from the drinking water standard for barium be denied.

I, Christan L. Moffett, Clerk of the Illinois Pollution Control Board, hereby certify the above Opinion and Order were adopted on the 16th day of February, 1978 by a vote of 5-0.


Christan L. Moffett, Clerk
Illinois Pollution Control Board