OPEN LETTER TO WINNIPEG CITY COUNCIL:

Subject: OurWinnipeg 2045 & smart water meters
July 17 Council Agenda – Recommendation on Opt-Out for Advanced Metering System (AMS)

Chelsea, July 16 2025

Dear Mayor Gillingham and Members of Council,

"*DON'T LIKE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, I GUESS,*" That is what Councilor Ross Eadie said when his amendment to a proposal for an opt-out program from the installation of a smart water meter in Winnipeg was rejected, and subsequently followed by a proposal by councilor Browaty to forego any form of opt-out. No opting out for people who are already injured and disabled by exposure to electromagnetic pollution; no opt-out for people who want to prevent this happening to them. No opt-out whatsoever, even though the City of Winnipeg before, in 2024, stated it intended to provide an opt-out program. What happened?

OurWinnipeg 2045

Winnipeg's Corporate vision is "*To be a vibrant and healthy city which places its highest priority in quality of life for all its citizens*", (Our Winnipeg 2045, Development Plan). Winnipeg wants to think globally and act locally it claims, referring to the UN's SDG's: "*....In summary the vision for OurWinnipeg is to be a thriving, sustainable, and resilient city, grounded in a strong commitment for human rights, that is welcoming and contributes to an equitable, and high quality of life for all.*" (page 13) . The chapter "*Living in a sustainable city*" on page 15 talks about leadership and good governance, ... All the elements are there, in your OurWinnipeg2045. Where are those words in action? "*Leadership reflects listening, building relationships and taking the lead from the community to envision and build a healthy and inclusive city that offers all members a high quality of life. Residents impacted by decisions must be informed on the issues and engaged when their feedback can meaningfully influence outcomes.* " Is this group of people who are already disabled by artificial forms of electromagnetic fields and radiation too inconvenient for the council of Winnipeg, for the sustainable future they envision for Winnipeg?

Active Denial System

I can see why Councilor Ross Eadie stated that you cannot expect from a local, municipal councilor to judge the 'science' about electromagnetic radiation. Health Canada should do its job, a proper job and then there would not be any discussion. But they don't do a good job. At all. Their claim that this type of smart tech is safe is disinformation. Dis- not misinformation because Health Canada, a captured government department intentionally misinforms Canadians. There is an Active Denial System at work at the federal level. Should you just copy that active denial system at the local level? Hide behind Health Canada's obsolete views that benefit industries rather than the health of Canadians? Or stand up and take your own (local) responsibility?

Lofty goals & boots on the ground

Strategic plans on UN level, federal level or even provincial level can all be wonderfully abstract, full of lofty goals (-often translated into industry-benefitting sub goals): but at the local level is where it matters. You as Mayor and councilors have the proverbial boots on the ground. You as councilors have met, listened and engaged with people who are already injured by this technology. You have been fully informed and have been presented with enough information to know that this smart tech carries health risks. You represent all residents of Winnipeg. All residents should be able to decline your offer to install a smart water meter.

How a smart meter disabled me

I became severely electro-injured in 2016 through exposure to a Hydro-Quebec smart meter when we returned to our home having lived in Italy for four plus years. I had no idea what a smart meter was, never heard of it and was not aware they had installed it during our absence. My life would have looked very different today had I known what the risks were at the time. The upside was that it started a road to learn about electromagnetism being the fundament of life but it left me with severe cardiovascular issues, and many more symptoms of permanent and some transient disabilities. People should be able to decline your offer before it disables them.

If you as elected representatives impose a new smart water metering system on the residents of Winnipeg, residents should be fully informed about the potential risks of this technology so they can consent in an informed manner. Hydro Quebec allowed me to replace to smart meter from a non-transmitting meter. I paid for the change, only 85 dollars, and we pay 2,50 dollars a month for the "inconvenience" for sending our measurements to HydroQuebec. It remains strange to have to pay to accommodate my disabilities.

Good governance?

You as Mayor and council should provide the opportunity for people to have a non-emitting water meter be it through a specific opt-out program or not. How can a council renege on earlier promises of providing an opt-out program? Is that a sign of "G*ood Governance*"? The argument that the system will work less well if there is a minority of Winnipeg residents that choose not to have this 24/7 on their home or their property is a non-argument. A system is there to serve people, not the other way around. And that is where you, as elected representatives come in: to *build a healthy and inclusive city , its highest priority in quality of life for all its citizens.*

Defer decision

I would advise you to defer your decision tomorrow, on July 17th, and take more time. In the meantime you can connect with water meter companies and learn about possible opt-out options within the various systems that are offered.

Sincerely

Margreet van den Berg
Chelsea Quebec
(just north of Ottawa)

Our Winnipeg 2045, Development Plan
https://clkapps.winnipeg.ca/DMIS/DocExt/ViewDoc.asp?DocumentTypeId=1&DocId=8222