

**DOCUMENT 39 – COMMUNICATION TO THE MAYOR FROM THE  
COMMISSIONER OF HEALTH CONCERNING  
BACTERIOLOGICAL TESTING**

**July 10, 1893**

**TRANSCRIPTION**

City of Chicago,  
Department of Health.  
ARTHUR R. REYNOLDS, M.D.  
COMMISSIONER.

Chicago, July 10, 1893.

To the Hon. Carter H. Harrison,  
Mayor:

Dear Sir:—

I submit the following communication for your careful consideration, with the request that you present it to the City Council at its meeting tonight.

The City requires in the Department of Health a Chemical and Bacteriological Laboratory. The Milk Division is generally supposed to be a branch of this Department, but it is in no way connected with it. It has a laboratory for the inspection of milk, part of the equipment of which is the property of Prof. Stuart, Chief of its division, and is located at 39th street.

The ordinance creating the Milk Division should be amended to make it a branch of this Department, their laboratory brought to the City Hall, and their equipment added to what this Department already has. The additional apparatus required is far from expensive, and does not require to be frequently renewed, and would not exceed \$2,500. There need be no extra expense for men or salaries.

The examination and supervision of the milk used by the City is of great importance, but it is very much more important

that the water we drink should be pure. Sanitation in all its many branches in our day depends so much upon bacteriological examinations of various kinds, that the Department cannot successfully cope with the important problems placed before it without the aid of a fully equipped laboratory. Bacteriological examination is the only true and reliable guide to the degree of efficacy of the public and private disinfection that comes under our charge.

Any statements or advice concerning the quality of water, ice, or food products not based upon the results of bacteriological in addition to chemical examination is practically worthless. It is the only means of positively diagnosing Cholera, or of deciding between true and false Diphtheria, while it plays a leading part in diagnosing all contagious diseases.

Appended is a letter from Prof. Stuart of the Milk Division on the same subject.

Respectfully,

Arthur R. Reynolds M.D.

Commissioner of Health.