

Why fluoridate the water supply?

Since the 1930s, hundreds of scientific studies have conclusively shown that fluoridation produces measurable benefits.

Community water fluoridation is recognized as the foundation of effective dental decay prevention.

What is community water fluoridation?

Since all drinking water supplies naturally have some fluoride, this process is merely to adjust the fluoride content to achieve the ideal level to benefit oral health.

Community water fluoridation has been proven effective, safe, inexpensive, and practical.

Isn't it controversial?

In communities where the decision is made decisively and expediently, any controversy tends to be minimized. However, there are those few passionate people who, in spite of the proven benefits and even though it has full approval of the major health organizations in the United States (and many other countries), feel a need to contest fluoridation.

There are no facts to dissuade a community from fluoridating its water -- *particularly when the cost of the equipment and installation is fully covered by grant funding.* We will gladly assist you in responding to opposition by providing you with **solid, factual information** that is not just anecdotal or attitudinal.

As mentioned previously, all drinking water already contains some level of fluoride. And there are places in this country where that natural level already exceeds that recommended for optimum oral health benefits. *Even in those areas, the health of residents is not adversely affected by the fluoridated water.*

Is it well supported?

Above we refer to the unqualified approval community water fluoridation has received from major U.S. health organizations. It has been endorsed by the American Dental Association, American Medical Association, U.S. Department of Defense and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Other groups who publicly support fluoridation include the American Cancer Society, American Heart Association, American Dental Hygienists' Association, American Public Health Association, and American Academy of Pediatricians.



Who benefits from community water fluoridation?

Everyone -- that's the beauty of it. Regardless of a person's age, living standards, or ability to get dental care, each resident equally shares access to this opportunity for improved oral health. *And the benefits continue for a lifetime.*

What are the real benefits?

Besides the general observation that it is the most efficient way to prevent tooth decay, fluoridating community water produces these measurable results:

- 20 to 40% less dental decay in persons of all ages,
- significantly fewer children needing permanent teeth extracted,
- more adults able to keep their teeth for a lifetime,
- older adults less likely to suffer from decay on teeth roots,
- lower dental bills for treatment of decayed teeth,
- reduction of procedures that necessitate anesthesia and drilling.

Is oral health really that big a deal?

Those that do not realize what a toll poor oral health takes on a community probably have either not ever endured severe dental problems, or have always had dental services readily available. That just isn't the case for way too many.

Oral health problems affect the ability of children to learn, for example. On a national basis, 52 million school day hours are lost annually because of dental issues. And in the workplace, adults triple that amount of lost time due to poor oral health.

You might find it interesting to visit with school officials and employers in your area about their experiences with the inefficiencies caused by dental problems. And while you're at it, check with the hospital. You'll probably be surprised at the emergency room visits attributable to oral disease.

What about the on-going cost?

Once you have the equipment installed, the cost for fluoridating the water is minimal. (Annual figures range from 12¢ to \$5.41 per person.) Even over a lifetime, the total cost is often less than the treatment for one cavity. That's why water fluoridation is the most cost-effective way there is to prevent tooth decay -- *and the benefits become available to everyone equally.*