

Fluoridated water on tap



Good Oral Health

BETTER HEALTH WITH FLUORIDATED WATER

Did you know that fluoride is a mineral that naturally exists in water? It does, but usually in concentrations too low to prevent tooth decay. Communities opt to add small amounts of this naturally occurring mineral to their public drinking water systems to levels which result in maximum tooth decay reductions. This is a process called “fluoridation” and experts at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that it reduces tooth decay over a lifetime by 25% for both adults and children.

Communities in Florida have been fluoridating their water as far back as the late 1940’s with City of Gainesville being the first to do so in 1949.

CONTINUING TO PROVIDE FLORIDIANS A WITH FLUORIDATED DRINKING WATER MAKES SENSE FOR SEVERAL REASONS:

- **Everyone benefits from fluoridation.** Fluoridated water (and beverages made with it) strengthens the enamel of teeth for all who drink it, regardless of their age, race, ethnicity or income level. It doesn’t require them to make a single change to their daily routine. No wonder the "CDC named community water fluoridation one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.”
- **Fluoridation saves taxpayers and families money.** Research in Louisiana, New York and Texas shows that local fluoridation policies save state Medicaid dollars by reducing the need for costly dental treatments. The average per-person cost for fluoridating water over a lifetime is far less than the cost of a single dental filling. By reducing the need for dental procedures, fluoridation saves families money as well as our healthcare system.
- **Healthier teeth improve learning.** Children with poor dental health are nearly 3 times more likely to miss school. Teens with dental pain are 4 times more likely to earn lower grades.

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- **Healthier teeth help people in the job market.** The factory-based economy is long gone. Floridans with good-paying jobs are most likely to be meeting and interacting face-to-face with customers and co-workers. Having unhealthy or missing teeth can place someone at a disadvantage for getting these jobs.
- **Fluoridation builds on the benefits of toothpaste.** Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents 25% of tooth decay in children and adults, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste. Fluoridated water and fluoride toothpaste are like seatbelts and airbags. One of them is good, but both of them are better.
- **Solid evidence proves it's safe and effective.** For over 70 years, the best available scientific evidence consistently indicates that community water fluoridation is safe and effective. In 2013, after reviewing 161 studies, the U.S. Community Preventive Services Task Force recommended fluoridation based on “strong evidence” of its positive impact.
- **Fluoridation is backed by the leading health and medical organizations.** These respected organizations include the American Medical Association, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Institute of Medicine, American Dental Association, American Dental Hygienists' Association, and the American Public Health Association.

To learn more about community water fluoridation, please contact the **Florida Department of Health, Public Health Dental Program** at 850-245-4333 or its website at: <http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/community-health/dental-health/fluoridation/index.html>

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WATER FLUORIDATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE, VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/basics/>

Campaign for Dental Health (American Academy of Pediatrics)

<http://www.ilikemyteeth.org/fluoridation/effects-of-fluoride/>

Children's Dental Health Project

<http://www.ada.org/en/public-programs/advocating-for-the-public/fluoride-and-fluoridation/ada-fluoridation-resources/fluoridation-facts-publication>

ADA Fluoridation Facts Compendium

<http://www.ada.org/en/public-programs/advocating-for-the-public/fluoride-and-fluoridation/ada-fluoridation-resources/fluoridation-facts-publication>

