

# Community Water Fluoridation Facts

- Fluoridation of community water supplies is the single most effective public health measure to prevent dental decay.<sup>1</sup>
- Throughout more than 70 years of research and practical experience the best available scientific evidence has consistently indicated that fluoridation of community water supplies is safe.<sup>1</sup>
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has proclaimed community water fluoridation (along with vaccinations and infectious disease control) as one of ten great public health achievements of the 20th century.<sup>1</sup>
- More than 125 national and international health, service, and professional organizations recognize the public health benefits of community water fluoridation for preventing dental decay.<sup>2</sup>
- Studies prove water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing dental decay by at least 25 percent in children and adults, even in the era of widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.<sup>2</sup>
- Tooth decay, which fluoride fights, is the most common chronic health problem facing children in the U.S. It is 4 times more common than asthma.<sup>1</sup> Without fluoridation there would be many more than the estimated 51 million school hours lost per year in this county because of dental related illness.<sup>3</sup>
- Water that has been fortified with fluoride is similar to fortifying salt with iodine, milk with vitamin D, and orange juice with vitamin C.
- The average cost for a community to fluoridate water is estimated to range from approximately \$3 per year per person in small communities to approximately \$0.50 per year per person in large communities.<sup>2</sup>
- For most cities, every \$1 invested in water fluoridation yields \$38 savings in dental treatment costs. An individual can have a lifetime of fluoridated water for less than the cost of a silver filling.<sup>4</sup>
- The latest data show that in 2012, 74.6 percent of the U.S. population on public water systems, or a total of 210.6 million people, had access to fluoridated water.<sup>1</sup>
- From 2000 to 2011 more than 362 U.S. communities in 41 states have voted to adopt or retain successful fluoridation programs.<sup>1</sup>
- Fluoridation has been thoroughly tested in the U.S. court system, and found to be a proper means of furthering public health and welfare. No court of last resort has ever determined fluoridation to be unlawful.<sup>1</sup>
- Be aware of misinformation on the internet and other junk science related to water fluoridation.
- One of the most widely respected sources for information regarding fluoridation is the American Dental Association. The ADA maintains fluoride and fluoridation web pages at [www.ada.org/fluoride](http://www.ada.org/fluoride).

1 Fluoridation Safety. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/safety/>. Accessed April 10, 2015

2 Fluoridation Facts American Dental Association website <http://www.ada.org/goto/ffcompendium/>. Accessed April 10, 2015

3 Pourat N, Nicholson G. Unaffordable dental care is linked to frequent school absences. UCLA Center for Health Policy Research. 2009.

4 Cost Savings of Community Water Fluoridation. U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website. <http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/factsheets/cost.htm>. Accessed April 10, 2015.

