

Community Water Fluoridation in Connecticut

COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION (CWF) is the most cost-effective means of preventing dental caries and the most effective way to deliver anti-caries benefits to entire communities.

Connecticut’s law should be updated to align with recent federal health recommendations.

- In April 2015, the U.S. Health and Human Services [recommended](#) that local water systems set the fluoride level to 0.7 milligrams per liter for fluoridation.¹
- Connecticut’s 1965 law [sets](#) the fluoride level a little higher, reflecting the original federal standard.²

CONNECTICUT BENEFITS

- **Connecticut was the first state to enact a law guaranteeing access to fluoridated water.** This 1965 law is a significant reason why fluoridated water reaches at least [nine in 10](#) Connecticut residents whose homes are served by a public water system.³
- **Connecticut’s fluoridation law [applies](#) to local water systems that serve at least 20,000 people.**² Some of the other water systems also control the level of fluoride in water.
- **Thousands of research studies and 75 years of experience have shown that water fluoridation is safe, effective and the best method of improving oral health in a community.**⁴
- **Connecticut’s law on fluoridation saves money for families and taxpayers.**⁵
- **Connecticut’s law ensures broad access to fluoridated water for most residents of our state** reduces the need for dental fillings, crowns or other costly treatments.⁴
- **Both children and adults benefit from water fluoridation.** Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents at least 25% of tooth decay in children and adults over a lifespan.⁶
- **The cost to fluoridate water for the lifetime of one person is less than the cost to treat one cavity.**⁷
- **If Connecticut’s law were weakened or ended, our most vulnerable people would suffer the most.**
 - Fluoridation benefits *everyone* who drinks fluoridated tap water or uses it to prepare foods or beverages.
 - A 2002 research paper [concluded](#) that fluoridated water is “the most effective and practical method” for closing the gap of tooth decay between affluent and disadvantaged Americans.⁸

FLUORIDE FACTS

- **Fluoridation is the adjustment of fluoride that occurs naturally in water** to an optimal level to prevent tooth decay.⁶
- **After 70 years of widespread fluoridation, more seniors are keeping most or all of their teeth,** thanks in part to fluoride in water.¹⁵
- **The long history of research into fluoride’s cavity-prevention impact that has been [traced to 1874](#).**¹⁶
- **A 2013 study published by the American Journal of Public Health showed no link at all between fluoride in water and IQ scores.**¹⁷
- **A 2011 Harvard study, with a design approved by the National Cancer Institute, found no link between fluoride and bone cancer.**¹⁸
- **Public Health England examined research on eight categories of adverse health conditions—including kidney stones and bladder cancer—and found no link between them and fluoridation.**¹⁹
- **Fluoride in water prevents tooth decay by providing frequent and consistent contact with low levels of fluoride” over the course of a day.** Research conducted over the past 10 years—at a time when most people regularly use fluoride toothpaste—continues to show that people living in fluoridated communities have significantly less tooth decay.²⁰
- **The previous range (0.7 to 1.2 milligrams per liter) was established with the assumption that children consumed different amounts of water based on the regions where they lived.** Recent research shows that water consumption levels are fairly similar from one region to the next.¹
- **The target was set at 0.7 mg/L, recognizing that fluoride is widely available through other sources, including toothpaste and mouth rinses.** Over the past five years, health experts have updated a variety of recommendations, including the appropriate daily intake for Vitamin D and calcium.

NEED FOR FLUORIDE

- **Although dental caries (tooth decay) is largely preventable, it remains the most common chronic disease of children aged 5 to 17 years.** In Connecticut, tooth decay affects:
 - 1 out of 5 children, ages 3- 5 years
 - 2 out of 5 children, ages 6 – 9 years⁹
- **Poor dental health has significant consequences.**
 - Research [shows](#) that children with poor dental health are nearly three times more likely to miss school and are four times more likely to earn lower grades.¹⁰
 - News stories [report](#) how missing or unhealthy teeth hurt adults’ job opportunities.¹¹
- **Oral health is directly connected to the overall health of children and adults.**¹²
- **Dental caries is the most common chronic childhood disease and has significant consequences.**¹³

REGULATION OF FLUORIDE ADDITIVES IN CONNECTICUT

- **For 50 years, Connecticut has required fluoride to be added to community water when supplied to over 20,000 people** at an effective content level of .8 – 1.2 milligrams per liter.²
- **Water fluoride levels are monitored daily in Connecticut** to ensure optimal fluoridation.²
- **The quality and safety of fluoride additives are ensured by NSF/ANSI Standard 60**, a program commissioned by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and managed by NSF International.²

MAJOR HEALTH AND MEDICAL ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORT CWF

- **The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) named community water fluoridation one of [10 great public health achievements of the 20th century](#).**⁶
- **The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) supports fluoridation as an intervention that optimizes the level of fluoride in drinking water, resulting in pre-eruptive and post-eruptive protection of the teeth.**¹⁴
- **The Pew Charitable Trusts acknowledges water fluoridation as one of the most cost-effective strategies for states and communities to improve oral health of residents.**²¹

Resources

- 1 <http://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2015/04/27/hhs-issues-final-recommendation-for-community-water-fluoridation.html>
- 2 http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/drinking_water/pdf/Water_Fluoridation_Fact_Sheet.pdf
- 3 <http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/statistics/2012stats.htm>
- 4 http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Member%20Center/Files/fluoridation_facts.ashx
- 5 <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/oral/fluoridation.html>
- 6 <http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/>
- 7 http://fluorideinfo.org/fluoride_waterFluoridation.html
- 8 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/12474623>
- 9 http://www.ct.gov/dph/lib/dph/oral_health/pdf/oral_health_ct_2012_rev.pdf
- 10 <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/about/news-room/press-releases/2012/08/15/dental-problems-affect-school-performance>
- 11 <http://www.cnn.com/id/100810944>
- 12 <http://www.webmd.com/oral-health/features/oral-health-affects-wellness>
- 13 <http://www.mychildrensteeth.org/assets/2/7/ECCstats.pdf>
- 14 <http://ilikemyteeth.org/tag/tap-water/>
- 15 <http://ilikemyteeth.org/bad-news-but-plenty-of-good/>
- 16 <http://www.austinchronicle.com/news/2009-11-27/921484/>
- 17 <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.2105/AJPH.2013.301857>
- 18 <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21799046>
- 19 <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/fluoride-monitoring-report-finds-lower-levels-of-tooth-decay-in-fluoridated-areas-and-no-evidence-of-harm-to-health>
- 20 <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5014a1.htm>
- 21 <http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/collections/2015/01/promoting-community-water-fluoridation>