



community water **FLUORIDATION**

{talking points}



The first step to ensuring all Pennsylvanians have preventive dental care is to fluoridate our public water systems. **Adding fluoride to reach optimal levels in drinking water ensures that everyone, regardless of age or income, receives valuable health benefits.**



Fluoride is a proven cavity fighter. Eighty years of scientific studies show the safety and effectiveness of fluoridation. **Fluoride reduces tooth decay by at least 25% in children and adults.**



Fluoride is a naturally occurring element that has been proven to strengthen teeth and prevent disease. It has been lauded by countless national and international health organizations as one of the most important public health achievements of the 20th century.



More than 80 years of scientific research proves that CWF at the optimal level of .7 ppm is safe and effective. **Recent studies claiming that CWF causes neurological problems and low IQs were conducted in countries with much higher fluoride concentrations and did not take into account the lower level established in the United States.**



In instances where changes need to be implemented at a substantial cost to continue water fluoridation, it is very important that we don't lose sight of the long-term consequences of a decision. **The short-term cost of continuing to fluoridate our water would be more than offset by the long-term benefits of people having a much better foundation for good oral health.**

In the end, **community water fluoridation saves money.** The average lifetime cost per person to fluoridate a water supply is less than the cost of one dental filling. For every \$1 invested in fluoridation, there is at least a \$20 savings in dental treatment costs. The CDC estimates a savings of \$6.5 billion annually.



CWF reduces cavities in adults from 20-40% and 60% for children. **Research suggests that access to CWF over a person's lifetime costs less than the restoration of one tooth with a cavity.**



Tooth decay remains the single most common chronic disease in children. Population- based prevention programs are the first line of defense against tooth decay. This is why **more than 125 national and international organizations including the American Dental Association, the CDC, the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians also recognize the public health benefits of community water fluoridation for preventing dental decay.**



Pennsylvania is facing a dental workforce shortage. Ending CWF **will increase dental disease** at a time when it is becoming more difficult to access dental care. More patients will seek dental treatment in emergency rooms, a trend that is already costing Pennsylvania taxpayers \$35M annually.