NORTH CAROLINA DENTAL SOCIETY

FLUORIDE
FACTS AND FIGURES

The Benefits of Community Water Fluoridation

The North Carolina Dental Society, which represents the majority of dentists across the state, recognizes and supports the use of fluoride in community water as **safe and effective** for preventing tooth decay in children and adults.

How Does Fluoride Help Prevent Tooth Decay?

Fluoride makes tooth enamel stronger, helping to protect teeth from acids that cause cavities. It also helps repair early damage to teeth and reduces the bacteria that lead to decay.

What is Community Water Fluoridation?

Fluoride is a natural mineral already found in water. Community water fluoridation is the process of adjusting those fluoride levels to the recommended amount of 0.7 milligrams per liter to help prevent tooth decay.

What Does Fluoridation Cost?

The lifetime cost of fluoridation per person is less than the cost of a single filling. Community water fluoridation saves money and time. Fewer dental problems means fewer dental visits and less time away from school or work.

IS FLUORIDATION SAFE?

Yes. Here's why:

- **75+ years of research and experience along with thousands of studies in peer-reviewed scientific journals** finds community water fluoridation is safe.

- Public health policies **rely on the weight of scientific evidence,** not a single study.

- Decades of research find a **25% reduction in cavities among those who drink fluoridated water.**

The National Academies of Sciences weighs in

After a peer review, The National Academies of Sciences **rejected claims** linking fluoride to poor cognitive development, or low IQ. The group determined that fluoride at 0.7 milligrams per liter (the recommended level) and even up to 1.5 mg per liter has no impact on IQ.

FLUORIDE: *Small Tweaks. Big Results.*

FACTS

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services announced a recommendation that community water systems adjust the amount of flouride to **0.7 mg/L** to achieve an optimal flouride level to help prevent tooth decay.

So, just how much is 0.7 milligrams per liter of water? It's like...

23 miles
1"

1 inch
in **23 miles**
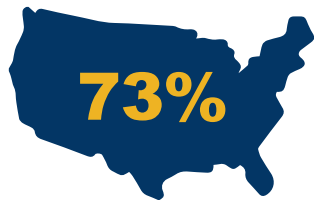
1 minute
in **1,000 days**

1¢
1 cent
in **$14,000**

Named one of ten great public health achievements of the 20th century by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, community water fluoridation has played a vital role in reducing tooth decay.

Nearly **73% of the U.S. population** on community water systems—**209 million people**—benefit from fluoridation.

73%

- **Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease for adults and children** in the U.S., disrupting lives and undermining success.

- **Children lose 34 million hours of school annually** due to unplanned dental visits

- Untreated dental disease **costs the U.S. economy more than $45 billion** in productivity each year.

- **Fluoride is a natural mineral** found in all bodies of water, including lakes, rivers, and oceans.

- Drinking water with the recommended fluoride level **strengthens tooth enamel and reduces cavities by 25%** in both adults and children.

- **Fluoride in water and toothpaste work together,** like seatbelts and airbags—they're both essential for protecting dental health.

The facts speak for themselves.

In Calgary, one of Canada's largest cities, **cavity rates rose significantly after fluoridation ended in 2011**, despite people's access to fluoride toothpaste, and surpassed those in a similar city that kept fluoridated water. As a result, Calgary's city council voted to restore community water fluoridation.

"The North Carolina Dental Society supports decades of valid scientific research confirming the safety and efficacy of proper fluoride levels in drinking water. Dentists across North Carolina and the nation are committed to improving oral and overall health, recognizing fluoridated water as a proven solution—despite financial disincentives."

-Jim Goodman, chief executive officer and executive director, NC Dental Society