



# 10 Reasons to Fluoridate Public Water

**Single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay.** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has proclaimed community water fluoridation one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Ten Great Public Health Achievements – United States, 1990-1999." *MMWR* 1999;48(12):241-3.

**Natural.** Fluoride is already present in all water sources, even the oceans. Water fluoridation is simply the adjustment of fluoride that occurs naturally in water to a recommended level for preventing tooth decay.

**Similar to fortifying other foods and beverages.** Water that has been fluoridated is similar to fortifying salt with iodine, milk with vitamin D, orange juice with calcium and bread with folic acid.

**Prevents dental disease.** It is the most efficient way to prevent one of the most common childhood diseases – dental decay. An estimated 51 million school hours are lost each year due to dental-related illness.

Gift, H.C. "Oral Health Outcomes Research: Challenges and Opportunities." In Slade, G.D., ed., *Measuring Oral Health and Quality of Life*. Chapel Hill, NC: Department of Dental Ecology, University of North Carolina 1997;25-46.

**Protects all ages against cavities.** Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents at least 25 percent of tooth decay in children and adults, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.

\*Griffin S.O., et al. "Effectiveness of Fluoride in Preventing Caries in Adults." *J Dent Res* 2007;86(5):410-415.

\*\* Task Force on Community Preventive Services. "Promoting Oral Health: Interventions for Preventing Dental Caries, Oral and Pharyngeal Cancers, and Sports-related Craniofacial Injuries: A Report on Recommendations of the Task Force on Community Preventive Services." *MMWR* 001;50(RR21):1-13. View information at [thecommunityguide.org/oral/fluoridation.html](http://thecommunityguide.org/oral/fluoridation.html) and [cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5021a1.htm](http://cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5021a1.htm)

**Safe and effective.** For more than 65 years, the best available scientific evidence consistently indicates that community water fluoridation is safe and effective.

**Saves money.** The average lifetime cost per person to fluoridate a water supply is less than the cost of one dental filling. For most cities, every \$1 invested in water fluoridation saves \$38 in dental treatment costs.

Griffin S.O., Jones, K., Tomar, S.L. "An Economic Evaluation of Community Water Fluoridation." *J Public Health Dent* 2001;61(2):78-86.

**Recognized by more than 100 organizations.** The American Dental Association (ADA) as well as the U.S. Public Health Service, the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization and more than 125 national and international organizations recognize the public health benefits of water fluoridation.

ADA Fluoridation Facts Compendium. Available at [ADA.org/4378.aspx](http://ADA.org/4378.aspx)

**Availability of fluoridation continues to grow.** In the United States, 73.9 percent of the population on public water systems receive fluoridated public water, or a total of 204 million people.\* This is an increase of almost nine percent from 2000. The Healthy People 2020 goal is for 79.6 percent of the population on public water systems to have access to fluoridated water.\*\*

\*CDC Reference Statistics on Water Fluoridation Status. [cdc.gov/fluoridation/statistics/reference\\_stats.htm](http://cdc.gov/fluoridation/statistics/reference_stats.htm)

\*\*Healthy People 2020. [healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/objectiveslist.aspx?topicid=32](http://healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/objectiveslist.aspx?topicid=32)

**Endorsed by the American Dental Association.** One of the most widely respected sources for information regarding fluoridation and fluoride is the American Dental Association. Learn more on the ADA's website at [ADA.org/fluoride](http://ADA.org/fluoride).