

WIDHA Talking Points

Introduce Yourself:

- Respected council members, thank you for allowing me to speak today. My name is _____, and I am a state-licensed dental hygienist in the area and advocate for community dental health and water fluoridation. I am here today to speak in favor of continuing water fluoridation in **(name of community)**.

What is Fluoride?

- Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral found in water sources worldwide. It dissolves into water from phosphate rock and is present in various consumer products, similar to iron and calcium.
- Water fluoridation is the process of adjusting fluoride levels in public water systems to an optimal level (0.7 parts per million) to effectively prevent tooth decay.

Fluoride Fact Sheets:

- [Fluoride Fast Facts: A Resource from the NIDCR and NIH](#)
- [NIH Fluoride Fact Sheet and Link for Consumers and Patients](#) (English)
- [NIH Información sobre fluoruro para consumidores y pacientes](#) (Spanish)
- [NIH Fluoride Information for Health Professionals](#)
- ilikemyteeth.org

Public Health Measure

- Fluoride helps prevent tooth decay by making teeth more resistant to acid attacks from bacteria and sugars.
- It can reverse early signs of decay and protect the entire community's oral health.
- Fluoride exists naturally in virtually all water supplies.
- There are proven benefits to our health from having the right amount of fluoride — just enough to protect our teeth — in the water.
- In 2011, federal health officials recommended a new level of fluoride for water: 0.7 parts per million.

- Community water fluoridation ensures access to cavity prevention regardless of physical ability, income, socioeconomic status, race, or age.
- The CDC recognizes fluoridation as one of the "10 great public health achievements of the 20th century."

Addressing Concerns and Misconceptions:

- Studies confirm that fluoride at the recommended level of 0.7 mg/L is safe and effective.
- The U.S. Public Health Service, CDC, and ADA continue to support water fluoridation based on scientific evidence.
- Courts consistently rule that fluoridation is legal and appropriate for the common good, balancing public health with individual rights.
- The lawsuit did not rule against water fluoridation; rather, it focused on fluoride exposure levels above 1.5 mg/L—more than double the recommended amount.
- The National Toxicology Program report cited in the lawsuit did not address fluoride's impact at the optimal level of 0.7 mg/L.

Importance of Fluoride for All Ages:

- Fluoride strengthens developing teeth and reduces decay over a lifetime.
- Children who drink fluoridated water have stronger teeth and lower rates of tooth loss decades later.
- A 2010 study confirmed that the fluoridated water consumed as a young child makes the loss of teeth due to decay less likely 40 or 50 years later. Fluoride at a young age helps reduce tooth loss over a lifetime.
- Fluoride reduces tooth decay in adults by up to 27%, supporting long-term oral health.
- Water fluoridation saves money, with every dollar spent saving an estimated \$38 in dental treatment costs.
- Investing in fluoridation reduces healthcare expenses and improves overall community well-being.

Recent Lawsuit Against the EPA:

- The lawsuit did not rule in opposition to community water fluoridation or deem community water fluoridation to be unsafe or less effective than the numerous studies over the past 75 years have demonstrated.
- The lawsuit was based on a National Toxicology Program study that examined fluoride exposure levels above 1.5 mg/L—more than double the recommended amount of 0.7 mg/L in the U.S.

- None of the studies used in the report were from the U.S., and the report itself does not address fluoride at 0.7 mg/L in relation to IQ. The report has been rejected twice by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine.
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- Fluoride is a naturally occurring mineral that exists in all water sources, so ending community water fluoridation does not remove fluoride in water, it just does not provide the level of fluoride needed to prevent tooth decay safely and effectively.

Conclusion:

- In conclusion, I urge you to make decisions based on science to benefit the greatest number of people in our community. Please vote to continue water fluoridation in **(community name here)**. Thank you for your time and consideration.
- If writing or emailing – adjust your conclusion as desired and sign your salutation at the end with your credentials.