



Colorado's Reaction/Experience

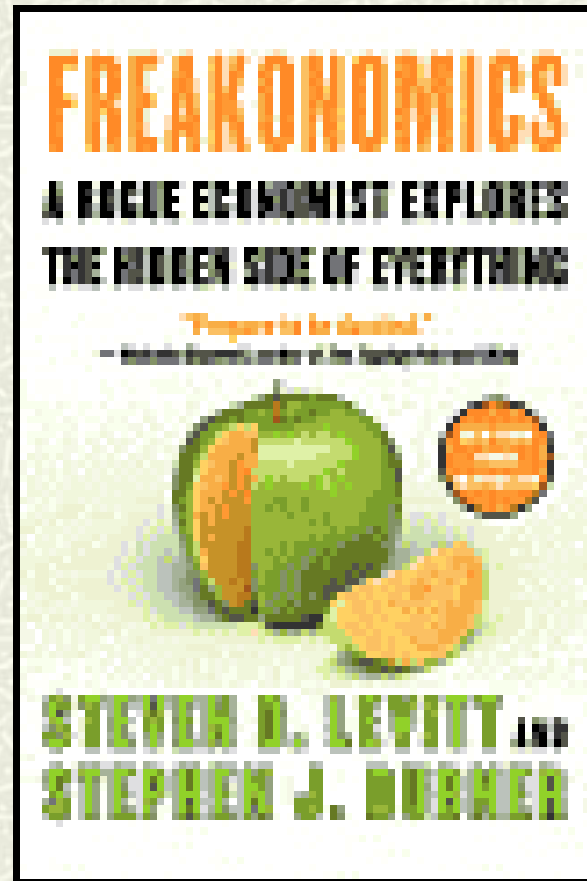
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**Colorado Department Public Health
and Environment**



Hazard + Outrage = Risk

- # Risk perception is determined by the level of hazard and the associated outrage
- # Environmental issues
- # “No adverse health effects at optimal levels”
- # Focus on the outrage



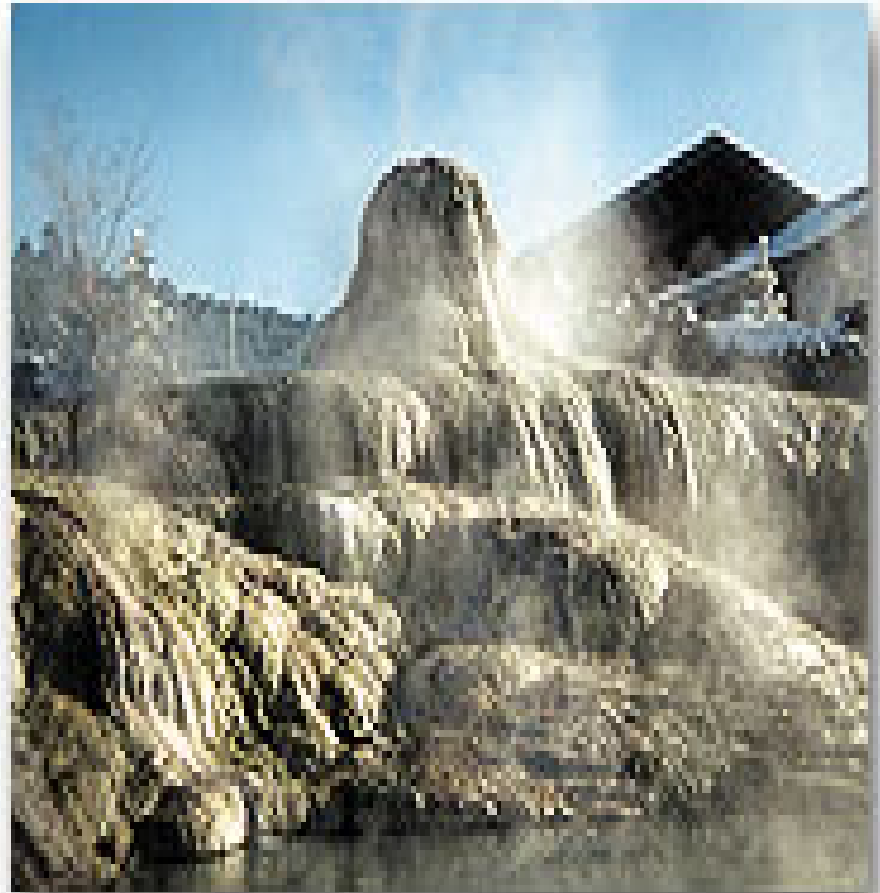
Colorado Springs



- # 220,000 people
- # Northern area: borders areas with 1.7 mg/L and 2.5 mg/L (McKay)
- # Hazard: cancer and complete dissociation of fluoride ion
- # Outrage: experts couldn't assure "no risk"
- # Approach: address the hazard; "No known risk" didn't work

Pagosa Springs

- ⌘ Pop. 4,300
- ⌘ Hot Springs
- ⌘ Hazard: skeletal fluorosis, fluoride burden
- ⌘ Outrage: dead horse, “conflicting” expert opinion
- ⌘ Approach: Chief Medical Officer



Telluride

- # Pop. 2,750
- # Hazard: role of government, total fluoride intake
- # Outrage: so much fluoridated water wasted; conflicting expert opinions
- # Approach: Resort workers who lacked access to oral health care



Fort Collins



- # Pop. 123,700
 - # Colorado State University
 - # Hazard: thyroid disease, cancer
 - # Outrage: gov't control
 - # Approach: Fluoride technical study group, ballot initiative, local board of health, election campaign
-

Support

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

March 31, 2005

Mr. Gary Cummins
Executive Director
Colorado Dental Association
3690 South Yosemite Street, Suite 100
Denver, CO 80237


Dear Mr. Cummins,

We would like to express our support for the use of fluoride in the water systems of Colorado. Community water fluoridation has been cited as one of the 10 great public health achievements of the 20th Century by the Centers for Disease Control. In the United States, approximately 145 million people in more than 10,000 communities benefit from drinking fluoridated water. Over 300 million people in more than 40 countries worldwide also enjoy the benefits of fluoridated water.


Sincerely,



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress


Wayne Allard
U.S. Senator



Ken Salazar
U.S. Senator


Mark Udall
Member of Congress


John Salazar
Member of Congress


Marilyn Musgrave
Member of Congress


Joel Hefley
Member of Congress


Tom Tancredo
Member of Congress


Bob Beauprez
Member of Congress

Colorado
Dental
Association
priority

Congressional
support

Healthy Smiles
campaign

For Keeping Fluoridation:	20,626 votes	66 %
To End Fluoridation:	10,501 votes	34%

Thank You, Fort Collins!

The healthy smiles will continue for you, your children, and your neighbors!



- [Fort Collins Coloradoan](#)
- [Rocky Mountain News](#)
- [Denver Post](#)
- [Greeley Tribune](#)
- [CSU Collegian](#)
- [Associated Press](#)

With gratitude from the 250+ dental and health professionals who asked for your support and understanding!

[Enter](#)

Am J Public Health. 1991 Apr;81(4):489-91.

Risk communication activities of state health agencies.

[Chess C](#), [Salomone KL](#), [Sandman PM](#).

Environmental Communication Research Program, Cook College, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08903-0231.

Surveys concerning the risk communication practices and needs of state health agencies were completed by agency commissioners and designated staff of 48 states and territories. These data indicate that agencies are expending more effort on responding to requests for information than on initiating dialogues with interested constituencies or alerting the public to risk. The data also suggest a gap between the stated philosophy and practice of the agencies.

PMID: 2003630 [PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]

Risk Anal. 1996 Apr;16(2):177-84.

[Related Articles, Links](#)

Customer perceptions of agency risk communication.

[Fisher A](#), [Chen YC](#).

“Customers think many risk communication activities are important, but that the agency is not especially effective in conducting those activities. Customers are moderately satisfied with much of the risk information they receive, although many have little contact from or interaction with the agency.

Customers identified other sources they use, which suggest potentially effective channels for this agency's risk messages.”

Risk Communication in Public Health

- # Peter Bennett, Dept of Health, London
 - Progressive change in literature from emphasis on public *misperceptions*....
 -to notion of two-way process
 - Forward planning versus crisis management
 - To taking public concerns seriously while doing justice to available scientific evidence
-

Next Steps



- # Document strategies that have worked
- # Dedicated research
- # Improve communications
 - Websites, tailoring to risk communication
 - Promotion rather than reaction, including fluoridated communities
 - Communication regarding fluoride “monitoring”
- # Consistent messaging
 - Engage partners, training coalition members

References

Bennett, P. and Calman, K. Risk Communication and Public Health. Oxford University Press: London; 1999.

Levitt, SD; Dubner, SJ. Freakonomics. HarperCollins Publishers; 2005.

www.riskcommunication.samhsa.gov/index.htm

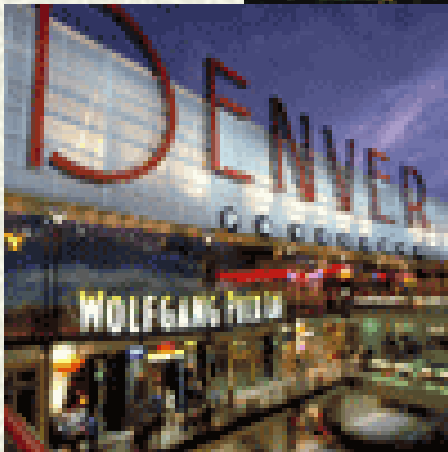
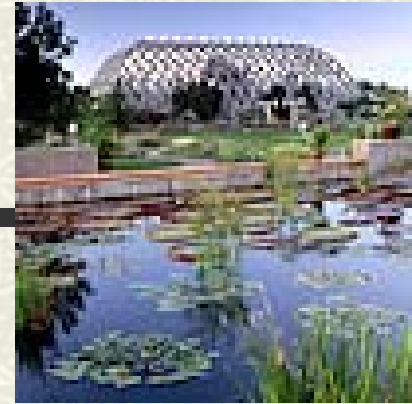
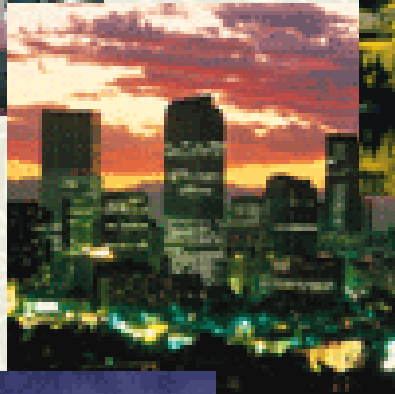
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www.pdhealth.mil/downloads/RCLecture.doc

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<http://ohioline.osu.edu/cd-fact/0195.html>.



NOHC: Denver 2007!