

## Why Fluoride Deserves Public Support

A Perspective for public officials

Created for use by fluoridation advocates

## What Makes This Issue Timely?

- Dental disease is the #1 health problem facing children in most California Counties. In school-based screenings of California children, it is not unusual to find 75% of all students have untreated dental decay, and over 10% have abscessed teeth with advanced infection.

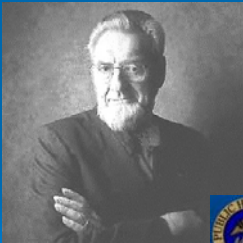
## What Makes This Issue Timely?

- There is strong community support for fluoridation. Local health professionals, non-profit organizations, foundations and community leaders are working together in local coalitions to support this proven public measure.

## What Makes This Issue Timely?

- Sacramento, Los Angeles, San Diego, Escondido, Mountain View, Sunnyvale and Modesto have all recently opted to fluoridate after thorough reviews. The SFPUC just voted to increase its service area receiving fluoridated water. KGO Radio, Northern California's ABC affiliate and the largest station with 1 million daily listeners supported fluoridation in an editorial that aired last month.

## Who Says Fluoridation Works?



"Fluoridation is the single most important commitment a community can make to the oral health of its children and to future generations."



— Dr. C. Everett Koop  
United States Surgeon General  
1981-1989

## Who Says Fluoridation Works?



"Fluoridation remains an ideal public health measure based on the scientific evidence in preventing dental decay and its impressive cost-effectiveness."



— David Satcher, MD, PhD  
Assistant Secretary for Health  
U.S. Surgeon General

## Ethics of Community Water Fluoridation

" We should ask not are we entitled to impose fluoridation on unwilling people, but are the unwilling people entitled to impose the risks, damage & costs of the failure to fluoridate on the community at large. When we compare the freedoms at stake, the most crucial is surely the one which involves liberation from pain & disease."

– John Harris  
Center for Social Ethics & Policy  
University of Manchester, England

Community Water Fluoridation is:

# SAFE

Over 55 years of use and thousands of credible peer-reviewed studies tell us this.

Community Water Fluoridation is:

# EFFECTIVE

Fluoridation reduces decay by up to 40% in children and 20% in adults

Community Water Fluoridation is:

# SOCIALLY EQUITABLE

It benefits everyone regardless of age, gender or ethnicity

Community Water Fluoridation is:

# GOOD PUBLIC POLICY

Much like providing vaccinations and adding vitamins to milk and cereal

Community Water Fluoridation is Endorsed by:

- American Dental Association
- American Medical Association
- Centers For Disease Control
- U.S. Public Health Service
- National Institutes Of Health
- American Academy Of Pediatrics
- American Academy Of Pediatric Dentistry
- American Academy Of Family Practice
- California Department Of Health Services
- California Dental Association
- Canadian Dental Association
- Delta Dental Plans Association
- World Health Organization
- Many, Many Others...

## Challenges to Fluoridation without Merit

### The food debate

Neither the AMA, the CDC, the NIH, the USPHS, the American Dietetic Association, nor the National Academy of Sciences have made any recommendations to not consume fluoridated water given that fluoride is found in other food sources.

**THERE IS NO DEBATE!**

## Challenges to Fluoridation without Merit

### The fluorosis debate

Fluorosis is a change in the appearance of teeth caused when excessive amounts of fluoride are ingested in early childhood while tooth enamel is forming. Optimally fluoridated water does not cause fluorosis.

The risk of dental fluorosis can be greatly reduced by closely monitoring the proper use of fluoride products by young children.

Most common causes of fluorosis include:  
Inappropriate use of fluoride supplements  
Routine swallowing of fluoridated toothpastes

**THERE IS NO DEBATE!**

## Challenges to Fluoridation without Merit

### The cancer debate

"...researchers saw no indication of a cancer risk associated with fluoridated drinking water."

— National Cancer Institute



**THERE IS NO DEBATE!**

## Challenges to Fluoridation without Merit

### The allergy debate

"...no evidence of allergy or intolerance to fluorides as used in the fluoridation of community water supplies."

— A Statement On The Question of Allergy to Fluoride as Used in the Fluoridation of Community Water Supplies

American Academy of Asthma Allergy and Immunology



**THERE IS NO DEBATE!**

## Challenges to Fluoridation without Merit

### The waste byproduct debate

- Yes, the fluoride used in water is a by-product of the phosphate fertilizer industry.
- Another by-product of that industry is phosphoric acid which you will find in almost every soft drink.
- Organic compounds are by-products of the petroleum industry.
- These compounds are used as building blocks to form life-saving synthetic drugs.
- Some of them are used in cosmetics.

**THERE IS NO DEBATE!**

## Challenges to Fluoridation without Merit

### The arsenic debate

Arsenic is present at minute concentrations (.33 ppb), well below all current EPA standards, in fluorosilicic acid.

- There are over 20 chemicals used in water treatment.
- Many of them contain very small amounts of lead and arsenic.
- These amounts are monitored and regulated by the EPA.
- Given all of the other contaminants in water treatment chemicals, why do anti-fluoridationists call attention only to arsenic?

**THERE IS NO DEBATE!**

## The Definitive Word on Fluoride

“...water fluoridation remains the most equitable and cost-effective method of delivering fluoride to all members of most communities, regardless of age, educational attainment or income level.”

— Centers for Disease Control  
Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report  
October 22, 1999  
48(41):933-940



## In Summary, Water Fluoridation is:

- Safe
- Effective
- Economical
- Socially Equitable
- Good Public Policy

**THERE IS  
NO DEBATE!**