



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

Benton County, Iowa

Benton County Board of Health Position Statement on Community Water Fluoridation

The Benton County Board of Health is strongly committed to the fluoridation of community water systems. Community water fluoridation has been extensively studied for over 70 years and has been proven to be safe and effectiveⁱ. Water fluoridation improves oral health for people of all ages, income levels and racial and ethnic backgroundsⁱⁱ. Fluoride in community water systems prevents at least 25 percent of tooth decay in children and adultsⁱⁱⁱ. Children who do not drink fluoridated water have a 32% higher rate of decayed or missing teeth^{iv}.

Today, fluoridation is still the most cost-effective way to prevent dental caries. The average lifetime cost per person to fluoridate a water supply is less than the cost of one dental filling, and in most cities, \$1 invested in water fluoridation saves \$38 in dental treatment costs^v.

In Benton County, the rate of oral disease hospitalizations is higher than the state rate^{vi}, and in Iowa, approximately one third of the population has not visited the dentist or dental clinic in the past year^{vii}. Today more than 100 million Americans lack dental insurance. Community water fluoridation offers an early, inexpensive preventive strategy that benefits all that simply turn on their tap^{viii}.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recognized fluoridation as one of the ten great public health achievements of the twentieth century. In the last few years, systematic reviews of community water fluoridation studies through the Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health in America, CDC's Recommendations for Using Fluoride to Prevent and Control Dental Caries in the United States, and the Oral Health Report issued by the Task Force on Community Preventive Services have all reinforced the safety and efficacy of fluoridation in preventing dental decay in both children and adults.

The Benton County Board of Health firmly supports and continues to encourage water fluoridation at concentrations recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as the most economical means to control the major public health problem of dental caries.

Benton County Board of Health

Kaitlin Emrich, MPH, Chairperson
Kathy Janss, RN, Vice-chairperson
Dan Lagrange, PharmD

Margaret Mangold, MD
David Martin, RN

ⁱ Department of Health and Human Services. *Statement on the Evidence Supporting the Safety and Effectiveness of Community Water Fluoridation*. June 8 2015.

<http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/pdf/statement-cwf-6-8-2015.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Water Research Foundation. *State of the Science: Community Water Fluoridation*. 2015.

http://www.waterrf.org/resources/StateOfTheScienceReports/Fluoride_StateOfTheScience.pdf#search=state%20of%20the%20science%20community%20water%20fluoridation

ⁱⁱⁱ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Water Fluoridation Basics*. June 17 2016. <http://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/basics/index.htm>

^{iv} Campaign for Dental Health, American Academy of Pediatrics. 2014. <http://ilikemyteeth.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/Fluoridation-Is-Effective.pdf>

^v Mouth Healthy. American Dental Association. 2016. <http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en/az-topics/f/Fluoridation>

^{vi} Iowa Inpatient Hospital Data 2010-2014, Iowa Public Health Tracking Portal <https://pht.idph.state.ia.us/Pages/default.aspx>

^{vii} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Division of Population Health. BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data [online]. 2015. [accessed Jul 18, 2016]. URL: <http://www.dev.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/>

^{viii} Campaign for Dental Health, American Academy of Pediatrics. *Common Questions About Fluoride*. 2016. <http://ilikemyteeth.org/fluoridation/fluoride-questions/>