



GREATER MILWAUKEE DENTAL ASSOCIATION

Dear Water Quality Task Force:

On behalf of the Officers and Board Members of the Greater Milwaukee Dental Association, we would like to express our support for community water fluoridation. Since Grand Rapids, MI first initiated community water fluoridation in 1945, numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and safety of this practice. The research and practical experience from credible scientific evidence consistently indicates that community water fluoridation is safe and effective.

Community water fluoridation is supported by the American Dental Association, the Center for Disease Control, the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, the US Surgeon General and many other agencies and organizations committed to public health. The Environmental Protection Agency as well as the Center for Disease Control have both concluded that community water fluoridation is safe and is not associated with lead levels in the water supply. In fact, the Center for Disease Control recognizes community water fluoridation as one of the top 10 Great Public Health Achievements of the 20th century.

Community water fluoridation helps prevent unnecessary tooth decay, and therefore, unnecessary pain which could lead to patients missing school or work. Community water fluoridation benefits the entire population of the water supply, regardless of socio-economic status. (Please note: tooth decay is one of the most chronic diseases affecting children living below the federal poverty level.) Even with an increased use of fluoridated toothpastes, studies still show that communities with water fluoridation see a lower incidence of tooth decay as compared to those without water fluoridation. Evidence shows that for most cities, every dollar invested in community water fluoridation saves \$38 in unnecessary dental treatment costs. Based on this and similar evidence, the benefits are well worth the approximately \$.50/person/year spent by large communities on water fluoridation.

It is important to understand that fluoride is not a contaminant; it is a naturally occurring compound that helps prevent tooth decay. There is no credible scientific evidence showing negative health risks associated with optimally fluoridated water. In the scientific community, where accurate, methodological research is paramount, fluoride is not a controversial issue.

Preventing tooth decay and other oral health problems is a goal of the dental profession. Community water fluoridation supports this goal in Milwaukee and the surrounding communities that get their water from Milwaukee. While we are in support of the Water Quality Task Force's goal of addressing lead levels in our water supply, we want task force members to understand that no credible scientific evidence exists that links optimal water fluoridation to increased lead levels in the water supply. We encourage you to view water fluoridation as a valuable service to the community, and ask that you work to ensure that Milwaukee's water supply is fluoridated at the optimal level of 0.7mg/L.

Thank you,

Greater Milwaukee Dental Association Board of Directors