

Information on Community Water Fluoridation

- Fluoride is a **naturally occurring mineral** found in various amounts naturally in Utah and other areas. The fluoride put in water is classified as a mineral, not a medicine.
- According to CDC, community water fluoridation is one of the **top 10 public health accomplishments of the 20th century**.
- Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease of children and adults in the United States. Community water fluoridation benefits children and adults of all demographics by **reducing dental decay by an average of 25% annually**.
- After over 70 years of use in the US, community water fluoridation has proven safe to administer at the recommended level for the public and to handle by water system operators who follow OSHA guidelines. There are **17,558 community water fluoridated systems** in the United States.
- Currently Salt Lake County, Davis County and Brigham City (since 1965) are the only areas in Utah that have community water fluoridation, which is monitored to ensure the safe, recommended 0.07mg/l level. These three areas represent about **half of the population of Utah**.
- In Utah, by law, **the addition of or removal of water fluoridation must be the result of a vote**, as was the case in each of the three areas mentioned above. House Bill 81 would take away the voter choice in our counties and municipalities and their ability to directly impact local decisions about community water fluoridation.
- A decision to eliminate community water fluoridation for Utah would **have serious consequences** and would result in many Utahns losing the benefits they receive today from community water fluoridation. Benefits of community water fluoridation include:
 - **Reduction of tooth decay** for all children and adults.
 - **Reduction in missed days of school and work**.
 - **Reduction in oral health treatment costs** - studies have shown that community water fluoridation reduces oral health costs by \$32 - \$45 per year per person. **For every 1 million individuals who have community water fluoridation in their area, there is an annual savings of \$32-45 million. The average national cost to fluoridate water for a year is \$1/person.** Ending community water fluoridation in Utah will result in shifting a small expense on the part of water fluoridated areas to individuals and families in these areas with increased dental costs or untreated dental decay.
- **Community water fluoridation is important to national security** - Because dental disease has been a significant reason why many soldiers are non-deployable; the Department of Defense (DoD) requires water systems of US military installations with over 3,300 personnel to be fluoridated.
- House Bill 81 suggests an alternative to community water fluoridation with the dispensing of prescription fluoride by pharmacists. **This alternative is problematic** and would result in over a million fewer adults getting the health benefits of fluoride. The average national cost to fluoridate water for a year is \$1/person compared to \$30-45 per person for supplemental fluoride.
- **Community water fluoridation is proven to be the best delivery method of supplemental fluoride.**
- The removal of community water fluoridation in Utah will increase decay and will **negatively impact many individuals and families who have the least access to oral healthcare in Utah today**.
- A resolution supporting community water fluoridation in Utah was **unanimously passed by the Utah Dental Association (UDA) House of Delegates on January 24, 2025, which included representatives of all UDA districts in Utah**.
- The Utah Oral Health Coalition supports community water fluoridation in Utah. Members of this coalition include **representatives of over 40 oral health and health related organizations in Utah**.