

**THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS
RESOLUTION ON COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION**

Resolution Summary

Tooth decay, also known as dental caries, causes pain and disability for millions of Americans every year. There are safe and effective methods to prevent tooth decay; one of the most cost-effective is community water fluoridation. Fluoridation of community water supplies involves adjusting the naturally occurring fluoride levels in drinking water to 0.7-1.2 parts per million, the optimal fluoride level recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service for the prevention of tooth decay.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, community water fluoridation is the single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay and is one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century. Studies conducted over the last 60 years have demonstrated that community water fluoridation is safe and effective in preventing dental decay in both children and adults.

This resolution seeks to encourage states to support and adopt community water fluoridation initiatives which have been shown to be effective in reducing dental caries and saving costs associated with tooth decay.

Additional Resource Information

American Dental Association

http://www.ada.org/prof/resources/positions/statements/fluoride_anniversary.asp

List of National and International Organizations That Recognize the Public Health Benefits of Community Water Fluoridation for Preventing Dental Decay

<http://www.ada.org/public/topics/fluoride/facts/compendium.asp>

Water Fluoridation Facts from the CDC

<http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/waterfluoridation/benefits.htm>

CDC Oral Health Resources

<http://www.cdc.gov/oralhealth/>

Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) Best Practices

http://www.astdd.org/index.php?template=practice_examples.html&shell=best

<http://www.astdd.org/docs/BPAFluoridation.pdf>

CSG Healthy States web conference: Protecting Precious Smiles: How States Prevent Oral Diseases and Curb Costs

<http://www.healthystates.csg.org/Events+and+Conferences/Web+Conferences/Oral+Health+Web+Conference.htm>

Community Water Fluoridation Management Directives

- **Management Directive #1:** Support state efforts to provide community water fluoridation.
- **Management Directive #2:** CSG staff will post approved resolution on CSG's Web site and make available through its regular communication venues at the state and local level to ensure its distribution to the state government and policy community.

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Resolution on Community Water Fluoridation


- WHEREAS,** community water fluoridation benefits everyone, especially high-risk populations. It is the most efficient way to prevent one of the most common childhood diseases-dental decay (five times as common as asthma and seven times as common as hay fever in 5- to 17- year-olds). Without fluoridation, there would be many more than the estimated 51 million school hours lost each year in this country because of dental-related illnesses;
- WHEREAS,** states need to reduce expenditures in Medicaid budgets and studies have proven that communities benefiting from fluoridated water use fewer Medicaid dollars to treat dental decay;
- WHEREAS,** the average cost for a community to fluoridate its water is estimated to range from approximately \$3 a year per person in small communities to approximately 50 cents a year per person in large communities. For most cities, every \$1 invested in water fluoridation yields \$38 savings in dental treatment costs;
- WHEREAS,** with more than 60 years of research and practical experience, the overwhelming weight of credible scientific evidence has consistently indicated that fluoridation of community water supplies is safe;
- WHEREAS,** the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has proclaimed community water fluoridation (along with vaccinations and infectious disease control) as one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century. Fluoridation of community water supplies is the single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay;
- WHEREAS,** more than 125 national and international health, service and professional organizations recognize the public health benefits of community water fluoridation for preventing tooth decay;
- WHEREAS,** community water fluoridation simply adjusts the level of fluoride that occurs naturally in water to the level considered optimal in helping protect against tooth decay. More than two-thirds of the population of the United States is served by public water systems that are optimally fluoridated;
- WHEREAS,** simply by drinking water, everyone, especially those without access to regular dental care, can benefit from fluoridation's cavity protection whether they are at home, work or school. Studies prove water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing dental decay by 20-40 percent, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste;

WHEREAS, the maximum reduction in tooth decay is achieved when fluoride is available before teeth erupt so that it can be incorporated while teeth are forming and after teeth erupt to help repair enamel damaged by acid from decay-causing bacteria;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that due to the devastating consequences of tooth decay, The Council of State Governments urges state and local policymakers to consider the effectiveness of community water fluoridation as an economical public health measure in preventing tooth decay– particularly among those at greatest risk.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that The Council of State Governments urges state and local policymakers to favorably consider policies related to the important oral health benefits of optimally fluoridated community water systems.

Adopted this 10th Day of May, 2006 at the
CSG Spring National Committee and Task Force Meetings
In White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia



Governor Jim Douglas
2006 CSG President



Senate President Earl Ray Tomblin
2006 CSG Chair