

Let's Drink to Good Health: Community Water Fluoridation

Virginia Oral Health Coalition Panel

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But first, ask yourself...



Hmm...

- Established, safe and effective public health intervention that has been practiced for 70 years
- Responsible for the drastic decline in tooth decay 1950s through 2000
- The most equitable and cost-effective method of delivering fluoride for all members of community
- All major public health, medical, and dental organizations approve
- More than 3,000 scientific studies and research findings concluding that CWF is safe

Fluoride Keeps Teeth Healthy

- Tooth enamel absorbs fluoride before and after eruption
- Helps tooth resist cavities
- Helps healing of very early tooth decay
- Prevents bacteria from making acid

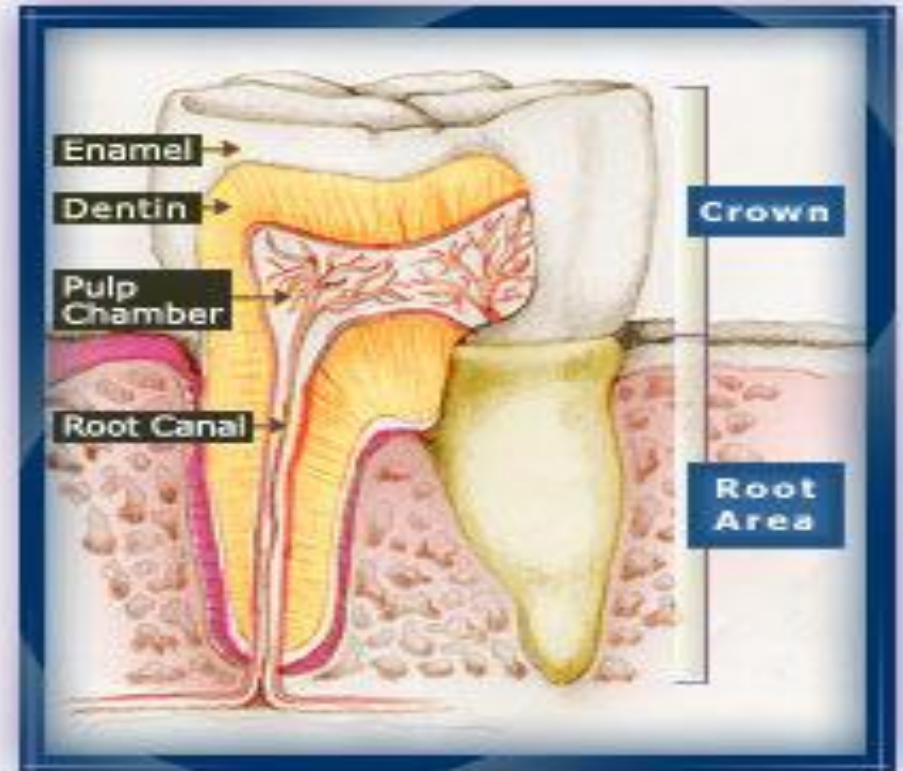


Image courtesy of Colgate

How Water Fluoridation Works



- **For Children:**
 - Fluoride becomes part of developing tooth enamel when swallowed
 - Prevents cavities
 - Keeps tooth enamel strong
- **For Children and Adults:**
 - Mixes with saliva to protect tooth enamel from plaque and sugars
 - Helps tooth enamel repair itself in early stages of dental decay



What the Evidence Shows

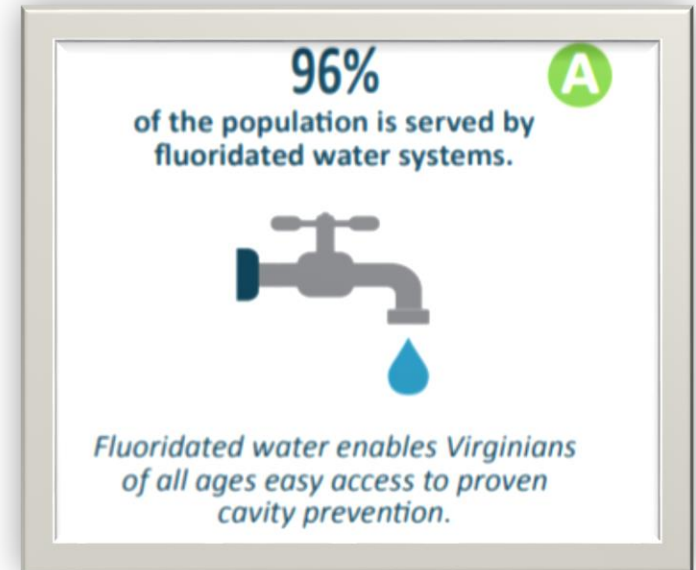
Water fluoridation reduces decay rates by approximately 25% among children and adults.

A 2010 New York study: children in the state's *less fluoridated* counties needed *33% more fillings*, root canals, and extractions than kids in counties where fluoridated water was widely available.



Brief History of Fluoride in Virginia

- First cities began fluoridating in 1951
- Steep upward trend of access to fluoridation
- By 1960, 62 localities fluoridating
- Currently, 96 percent of Virginians whose homes are served by public water systems receive fluoridated water
- Ranked #7 in US!



VDH: Dental Health Program

- DHP provides funding for fluoridation equipment
- Simple requirements in order to obtain funding
- \$120,000 per year: \$2,000-40,000 per award
- DHP works with ODW to identify water systems in need of assistance - Recent recipients:
 - Farmville
 - Harrisonburg
 - Kenbridge
 - Altavista
 - Rocky Mount

CWF is a Local Decision

- Oral health workers may not be aware that when active community members are against CWF, its continuance may be at stake
- Easy to stop fluoridation
- Age of Google = Age of *mis*-information
- Skepticism, distrust, and fear of safety and effectiveness of fluoridation



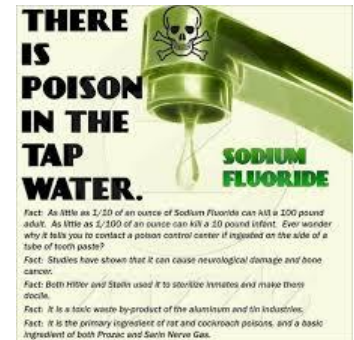
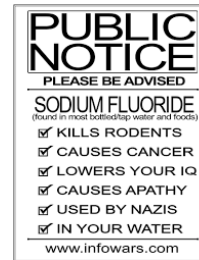
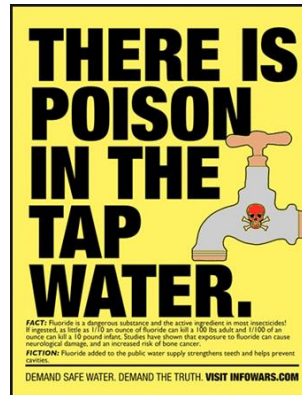
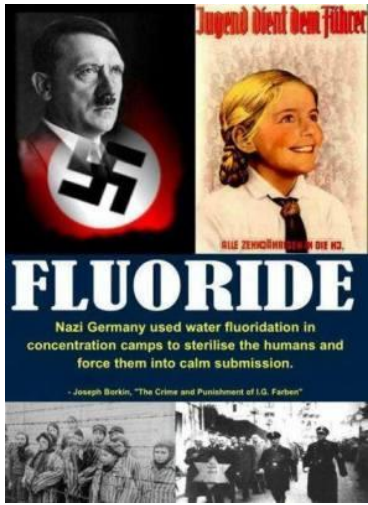
Anti-fluoridation
Poster



A QUICK GOOGLE SEARCH



is water fluoridation bad



Anti-fluoridation Movement

- In past 5 years, 74 cities have voted to remove fluoride from their water
- Fluoride Action Network (FAN)
 - Very strong social media messages
 - Very active - online and at the polls
 - Simplistic and alarmist view of fluoridation
 - Cites non-peer-reviewed, irrelevant studies
 - Graphics, charts, brochures, posters, handouts

Challenges to CWF in Virginia

- **Spotsylvania**
- **Bedford**
- **Brookneal**

Rapid Response Team

- Statewide team to support a locality during a CWF challenge
 - Members value oral health
 - Members tune in to local threats to CWF, such as:
 - Anti-CWF Letters to the Editor
 - Anti-CWF citizen speaking out at town meeting
 - Consumer Confidence Report indicates fluoride removal
- Build this network before it is needed
- People are more convinced by their own network than by the experts
- During local challenge, regular communication via phone/email

Rapid Response Team

State and Federal Partners:

- VDH Dental Health Program
- Virginia Oral Health Coalition
- Campaign for Dental Health (ILikeMyTeeth.org)
- CDC
- ADA

Local Partners:

- Dentists
- Hygienists
- Public health workers
- Social workers
- Teachers
- Pediatricians
- Parents
- VDH health district director
- Town board members
- Waterworks operators

How Can You be a CWF Partner?

- Join Rapid Response Team as a local partner
- Get the facts on CWF:
 - ADA Fluoridation Facts booklet
 - Visit ILikeMyTeeth.org = Campaign for Dental Health
- Educate patients on the importance and safety of water fluoridation
 - Most people don't have an opinion on CWF
 - Provide trusted resources
 - Web sites
 - VDH handouts
 - ADA fluoride brochures

Thank You!

*Please consider joining the
Rapid Response team
by filling out a card before you leave today.*

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