

## Community Water Fluoridation

Our Health Department conducted a review of the current research regarding fluoridation of community water. The research shows that this is a safe and cost-effective way of reducing dental cavities in communities. Almost 65% of the United States has fluoridated community water, and water fluoridation is considered one of the ten most important health advances in the last century.

### **Q: Is fluoridated water safe?**

A: Fluoridated water is safe. Much research has been done regarding fluoridation. A recent review of current research regarding fluoridation was done by our Health Department, and the studies continue to show that fluoridation of community water is safe.

### **Q: Does fluoride prevent dental cavities?**

A: Yes. Since 1945, communities that have fluoridated their water have seen a decrease in dental cavities.

### **Q: Is tooth decay still a serious problem?**

A: Yes. Over 84% of US children, 96% of US adults and 99.5% of Americans 65 years of age and older have experienced tooth decay.

### **Q: Does fluoride cause dental fluorosis?**

A: Yes. Fluoride has been shown to cause very mild to mild dental fluorosis. Communities with fluoride in the water, as well as those without, see fluorosis in the population. Fluorosis usually is a cosmetic problem only – chalky discolorations on the teeth

### **Q: If my water is fluoridated, do I still need to give supplements to my children?**

A: Probably not. However, you should talk to your physician or dentist about your particular situation and follow their recommendation.

### **Q: Does fluoride cause cancer, hip fractures or other health problems?**

A: Our health department, along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Medical Association, and others, has not found any significant health problems associated with fluoride in the water. You may want to discuss this with your own health care provider.

### **Q: How much does it cost to fluoridate the water?**

A: It is very little compared to the cost of dental care. For more specific figures, please call your water provider.

### **Q: I was told I may get variable water. What is this?**

A: It mean you will be receiving water with variable levels of fluoride, sometimes lower and sometimes the right amount, but never too much. If you are getting this, you probably should stop fluoride supplements for your children. Contact your physician or dentist about this. To determine if you live in an area that have variable levels of fluoridated water, please contact the Health Department at (916) 875-5881.