Facts about Community Water Fluoridation

Community Water Fluoridation (CWF) is the controlled addition of a fluoride compound to a public water supply to achieve a concentration optimal for dental caries prevention.1

Tooth decay is the most common chronic disease among American children. One of four children living below the federal poverty level experience untreated tooth decay.2

Water fluoridation prevents tooth decay by providing frequent and consistent contact with low levels of fluoride, ultimately reducing tooth decay by about 25 percent in children and adults.3, 4, 5, 6

School-aged children living in fluoridated communities on average have 2.25 fewer decayed teeth compared with children living in unfluoridated communities.7

The safety and benefits of fluoride are well documented and have been reviewed comprehensively by many scientific and public health organizations.8, 9, 10

CWF is one of the top ten greatest public health achievements of the 20th century.11

Virginia’s Board of Health recommends all public water systems in Virginia fluoridate their water.12 Over 95 percent of Virginians whose homes are served by public water systems receive fluoridated water.13

CWF has been identified as the most cost-effective method of delivering fluoride to all members of the community regardless of age, educational attainment, or income level.14, 15, 16

CWF is cost-saving, even for small communities.11

For more information about your water, visit: My Water’s Fluoride online at: www.nccd.cdc.gov/DOH_MWF/ or call your local water authority.

If you or your patients use water from a private well or other private source, fluoride levels should be checked by a laboratory. Contact VDH for more information: www.vdh.virginia.gov/fluoride-information


4 Featherstone JD. Prevention and reversal of dental caries: Role of low level fluoride. Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology.


13 My Water’s Fluoride online at: www.nccd.cdc.gov/DOH_MWF/.

