

**BOARD OF HEALTH RESOLUTION**

**Mandate to Notify the State Health Officer of Public Water System's  
Proposed Permanent Changes to Water Fluoridation Status**

WHEREAS, oral health is an integral component of overall health, and dental caries can result in loss of dental function and systemic infection (1);

WHEREAS, dental caries represent the most common chronic disease impacting children in the United States (2);

WHEREAS, water fluoridation reduces the prevalence of dental caries in adults by 20-40% and by 18-40% in children (3, 4);

WHEREAS, water fluoridation may reduce dental health disparities experienced by lower socioeconomic communities (1, 5);

WHEREAS, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have identified the fluoridation of water in preventing tooth decay as one of the ten greatest achievements in public health of the twentieth century (5);

WHEREAS, the Community Preventive Services Task Forces' April 2013 review of community water fluoridation recommends water fluoridation based on water fluoridation's effectiveness in reducing tooth decay across population groups (7);

WHEREAS, water fluoridation is recognized as the most equitable and cost-effective method for community-based delivery of fluoride (1, 8);

WHEREAS, no adverse health effect of water fluoridation other than dental fluorosis (a change in the appearance of tooth enamel) has been confirmed (9-11);

WHEREAS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention studies have demonstrated a return on investment of thirty-eight dollars in prevented dental treatment cost for every dollar invested in fluoridating public water supplies (12);

WHEREAS, the per capita annual cost for public water fluoridation ranges from \$0.11 to \$4.92 for communities with at least 1,000 population based on a 2014 cost-benefit analysis (13);

WHEREAS, no Alabama law or mandate requires public water systems to fluoridate water, and Alabama has experienced a ten percent decrease to 72% of the population receiving fluoridation via public water (14), and

WHEREAS, the Alabama Department of Health is planning to introduce legislation in the 2017 Alabama Legislative Session regarding notification of the State Health Officer of contemplated changes to water fluoridation by public water systems within Alabama.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Jefferson County Board of Health endorses:

- 1) The Jefferson County Health Officer to advocate for the adoption of legislation requiring any public water system considering a permanent change in the fluoridation of its water supply, including the removal of fluoride, to notify the Alabama State Health Officer no less than ninety (90) days prior to any vote or discontinuance.
- 2) Utilization of Jefferson County Department of Health resources, financial and human, to educate Jefferson County residents, policy makers and healthcare professionals about the health benefits of water fluoridation.



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Max Michael, III, MD, Chair  
Jefferson County Board of Health

## References

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