**HB 81 Water Fluoridation Statewide Ban**

**HOUSE BILL 81 WOULD BE A SERIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH POLICY STEP BACKWARDS FOR UTAH.**

Tooth decay (cavities) is the most chronic disease in the United States. **Cavities are infections in the teeth that can easily get into the bloodstream, sometimes causing serious harm.** Fluoride, which works to prevent tooth decay, is a mineral that binds with calcium in the body which is especially important in prenatal development when teeth (and bones) in these tiny, tiny bodies are forming. Young children also need both calcium (usually from milk) and fluoride (in tap water) to help prevent decay as their enamel is very thin. Their bodies are also creating adult teeth.

Brigham City, Davis and Salt Lake Counties keep the fluoride mineral consistency at 0.7 mg/liter which is the recommended level. In Utah **some areas** **have naturally occurring levels of fluoride at higher doses than** Salt Lake and Davis County. Here are just a few:

* Cornish 1.5
* Daggett Co. 2.0
* Elkhorn in San Juan Co. 1.5
* Johnson WS Uintah Co. 1.5
* Cedar Fort 2.3
* Winchester Hills WS, Washington Co. 1.5

The recommended ceiling for water fluoridation amount is 4.0 so these communities are still safe at these amounts. **It is disingenuous to prohibit treated water at a state level when a majority of voters in a locally shared water area have decided to implement it at recommended levels of 0.7 mg/liter.**

Fluoridation management is the least expensive way to provide communities with a **foundational** form of cavity prevention. Fluoride benefits affect adult teeth as well. Attaching to the tooth enamel, the fluoride ion in the fluoridated water continually bathes the teeth at the “perfect” amount; not too much, not too little. We all drink the right amounts for us according to our thirst. Toothpaste, sealants and treatments are add-ons.

1.5 million Utahns benefit from water fluoridation today. They all currently live in Salt Lake County, Davis County and Brigham City. They have a reduction of tooth decay of tooth decay by 25% - 50%. (compared to other cities throughout the U.S.) Data from poorer communities shows even greater positive effects in reducing socio-economic differences. 72% of the country has fluoridated water.

Water fluoridation benefits all people in the fluoridated areas. No person needs to be excluded. If you have questions check out the resource below. You will find answers to most questions you may have:

<https://ilikemyteeth.org/>

**WHAT IS TRUE?**

“Fake news” and “clickbait” undermine trust in community health providers both private and public. In today’s media it’s difficult to determine the best true sources of information. Here are a few facts:

* Salt Lake County and Davis County residents **DO support** water fluoridation.
* Water operators **DO fluoridate with the same precautions** as for chlorine and other substances.
* Fluoridated communities **DO wash, bathe, clean and flush** with fluoridated water. (Thank goodness it is also chlorinated!)
* Water fluoridation at the perfect amount **DOES NOT cause cancer** or bone loss. Fluoride is currently in the trial stages as a treatment for osteoporosis. Current results are mixed. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/chemicals/water-fluoridation-and-cancer-risk.html>
* Davis County residents largely **DO NOT water outdoors** with water that’s been fluoridated or chlorinated. Almost 90 percent of single-family homeowners and business owners use water that is untreated.
* Communities that stop fluoridation soon **RETURN TO fluoridating their water**. In Buffalo, New York, the water board quietly stopped fluoridating. Health care providers and parents noticed the increase in dental decay. They have just begun fluoridation again. <https://www.wgrz.com/article/news/investigations/2-investigates/after-nine-year-absence-fluoride-will-flow-in-buffalos-drinking-water-this-week/71-99dbb0ab-a315-41a6-9ac9-9f0a71471f8d>
* In 2023 voters in Brigham City, UT **VOTED 2,342 to 1,149 to keep fluoride** in their water with 39% of electors showing up.

**THE CALIFORNIA CASE – IQ AND OTHER STUDIES**

Northern District of California court decision **DID NOT order the EPA** **to ban water fluoridation**. The report was **rejected four times** before it was allowed to be published. The report cited is **not surviving peer review** and will probably be pulled, the court case overturned.

<https://ilikemyteeth.org/decision-in-epa-case-as-flawed-as-the-analysis-its-based-on/>

There have been **no studies** of fluoridation **at normal recommended levels** in the United States. Studies cited as correlations have been at higher levels and largely done in developing countries. Correlation does not mean causation. There are so many other factors.

There is one fantastic 30-year longitudinal study in New Zealand that shows **no correlation and no causation** between water fluoridation and IQ.

<https://ilikemyteeth.org/debate-fluoridation/does-fluoride-lower-iq-scores/>

**THERE IS NO EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT CHANGES TO CURRENT POLICY.**

**Family choice, individual choice.**

A public water system is not owned by an individual. It is an integration of systems owned and shared by families and individuals in a **community**. State Law says water fluoridation management can be determined at a city or county level. This also depends on any combination of water sources and contact points.

**NEGATIVE IMPACTS WHEN FLUORIDATION MANAGEMENT STOPS**

Studies show that when fluoridation ceases, tooth-decay in individuals and families climb. Decay rates quickly go back to managed pre-fluoridation levels. Although other sources of fluoride are now available, customers of water supplies without fluoridation continue to have higher rates of dental decay than those served by fluoridated water supplies:

* Increased risk of fluorosis due to difficulty of administering tablets and drops.
* When children have mouth pain, they are three times more likely to miss school.
* Students with dental pain are four times more likely to earn lower grades.
* Adults with dental problems are more likely to be unemployed.

**INCREASED COSTS TO FAMILIES**

Dental and other health care costs will increase along with physical impacts mostly on children 0–6 years of age. Medicaid cost and emergency room visits due to dental issues will increase along with **pediatric dental treatment needing anesthesia. There is currently a 9-12 month wait for hospitalized pediatric anesthesia dental work.**

When we fail to treat tooth decay in a preventive way with water fluoridation, dental treatment procedures shift costs from cities and counties burdening families, taxpayers and charities.

Access to dental care for at risk children and families is already limited in Utah and will become very difficult.

**FAMILY SAVINGS**

Community water fluoridation offers $43.61 per person per year in oral health costs savings. For Salt Lake County, Davis County and Brigham City this is annual savings of $65.4 million. Water fluoridation has more benefits than free dental care.

**OTHER THOUGHTS**

Significant portion of Utahns do not have dental insurance. Fluoride eliminates the oral health disparity between poor and wealthy. Water fluoridation management helps to alleviate pain, embarrassment, speaking impediments, loss of teeth, facial deformities and nerve damage.

Gut Health and Brain Health Studies show positive links that strong, healthy teeth and gums are linked to healthy gut as well as healthy brain. The plaques on your teeth are like the plaques in the brain.

Don’t listen to city officials, mayors, water providers, judges or your spouse. Is that really where you want to get your public health care information? Where do you want to get your news? Credible sources with scientific basis or other places?

Would the dental community support water fluoridation if they thought it was harmful? They have families too.

It only takes 3-4% of a loud uninformed minority to scare people into changing opinions, especially if you’re using fear as a strategy. Is it right to allow a small group of vocal opponents to deprive all other residents of something that improves health and quality of life? (Tyranny of the minority)

Data needs to come out showing the differences between Salt Lake/Davis and Washington, Utah Counties. Can such a study be funded legislatively before any action is taken?