

## Fluoridation Update October 2016

### Community Update

KKW Water District, ME – As part of the requirement to hold public hearings on ballot measures, Kennebunk held a forum on October 3 with Dr. Myron Allukian presenting points in favor of fluoridation while Dr. Bill Osmonson, acting director, FAN presenting the opposing view. Over 100 “Fluoride Safe and Effective VOTE YES” signs were placed in the seven towns served by the KKWWD by dentists from York County Dental Society. While each community votes separately, the total votes on this issue will be considered as a whole when they are tallied after the November 8 vote.

Ozark Mountain Regional Public Water Authority, AR – While it was reported that in September, the Ozark Mountain Regional Public Water Authority (OMRPWA) filed suit against the Arkansas Department of Health, the actual filing was on behalf of two water systems - Ozark Mountain Regional Public Water Authority, based in Diamond City in Boone County, and the Madison County Regional Water District, based in Huntsville. The Authorities are arguing that they technically sell water to 18 water systems and none of those individual systems have 5,000 customers, so they should be excused from fluoridation requirements. They maintain the Authority is not a water system as defined under Act 197 because it does not have control over potable water once it is delivered to the individual water systems. The suit asks the court to issue a stay and eventual reversal of the Health Department Board’s final order pending legal review, as well as costs and fees the authority has incurred.

Cortland, NY – Following a public hearing in Cortland on September 8, it was reported that additional public meetings would be held with the next one to cover “bio-ethics.” At this time, it appears further hearings have been cancelled. No action was taken at the meeting in September and Cortland’s future plans regarding fluoridation are unknown. Cortland is not currently fluoridated.

Wellsburg, WV – While few details are available, the city of Wellsburg is considering ending its fluoridation program. While dentists from the local dental society presented a number of positive facts about the value of fluoridation, it was reported that during a meeting in September, the town manager was unmoved by their arguments.

Wilkesboro, NC – On September 12, the town manager informed the City Council that fluoridation had been discontinued noting that children now get fluoride from many other sources. He indicated that he had made the decision with input from the staff at the water treatment plant and research conducted on the Internet. Additionally it was noted that the fluoridation program was put on hiatus starting in June 2015 because the town couldn’t get fluoride from its vendors due to a shortage and then was not restarted due to equipment needs. Following this meeting, the town manager noted he had received a tremendous amount of outpouring from the dental and medical community concerning this, providing research and scientific data supporting fluoridation. The town manager commented that the residents who opposed fluoridation were unable to support their opinions with significant data or scientific evidence. As a result, at their October 3 meeting, the Wilkesboro City Council voted unanimously to immediately restart fluoridation.

Jonesborough, TN – Fluoridation in Jonesborough will be put on hold until December or January according to the Mayor. The mayor has said that residents shouldn’t expect a vote before the holidays. The city council debated the issue five months ago at its April meeting. At the public hearing

they held in July, the majority of the residents who spoke out were in favor of removing fluoridation. Many of the proponents of fluoride at that meeting were healthcare professionals. The Mayor said the public will be notified when the issue is to be back on track for discussion.

Bisbee, AZ – On October 4, the Bisbee City Council voted 5-1 to reduce the fluoride level in their fluoridation program from 1mg/L to 0.7mg/L. Several residents continued to question the source and safety of the fluoridation additives.

Hartford, CT – On October 5, the Hartford Public Works, Parks and Environment Committee Meeting met to discuss a resolution put forth by the Council member, who is also the chair of the Committee, to lower or eliminate the use of fluoride in the public water supply. With information supplied by the Connecticut State Dental Association, the Committee tabled the resolution without taking any action on the resolution.

Clay City, IN – The Clay City Council voted 3-0 on October 4, to reintroduce fluoride in the town's water once final repairs to the city's water filtration system are complete next year. This issue was brought up to the City Council by the water system manager who said that fluoride had not been added to the town's water for some time. With plans being made for repairs, the manager used this opportunity to place the issue before the City Council.

Greenville, TX – After learning that fluoridation had ended in September 2013, a number of local health professionals, including local dentists, approached the City Council on July 26 about restarting their fluoridation program. With a natural level of fluoride of 0.3 mg/L, the proponents stressed the health benefits of fluoridation. On October 11, the City Council voted to reinstate fluoridation by a 4-2 vote. See more details in [ADA News story](#). However, two weeks later, after "several" people approached the Council to express their displeasure about the recent decision to reinstate fluoridation, the City Council agreed to revote on the issue on November 8<sup>th</sup>.

Knoxville, TN – The water supply in Knoxville has been fluoridation for decades. In October, the East Tennessee Medical Freedom Alliance, which is also opposed to vaccinations, publically began to advocate to stop Knoxville's fluoridation program. Alliance members plan to present research to the Knoxville Utility Board and have begun collecting residents' signatures in hopes of stopping fluoridation.

Santa Clara Valley Water District, CA – At the urging of fluoridation proponents, the Santa Clara Valley Water District (SCVWD) voted unanimously in November 2011 to fluoridate the water they supply to a number of communities in the South Bay area of San Francisco including San Jose. Now with planning complete, funding secured and physical plant at the ready, the SCVWD has announced via its Web site that fluoridation will be completed in December 2016 for eastern Santa Clara County and in 2020 for western Santa Clara County. With the fluoridation of San Jose, 45 of 50 largest U.S. cities will enjoy the benefit of optimally fluoridated water. The five remaining cities in order of size are Portland, Albuquerque, Tucson, Fresno and Wichita. On October 25, a lawsuit was filed by opponents of fluoridation in an attempt to stop fluoridation of the SCVWD. As explained by the plaintiff's attorney, 1995 California state mandate does not authorize a water wholesaler to fluoridate and the case calls for the system to stop fluoridating until such time as the state law is changed.

Patton, PA – Patton Borough officials have begun notifying residents that it will discontinue adding fluoride to its water system by the end of October. This decision appears to be based on information

from the city's water engineer who has claimed that the addition of fluoride has loosened sediment within the pipes causing corrosion. Little additional information is available at this time.

Wilmington, OH – In 1969, the Ohio mandated that all public water systems serving more than 5,000 people initiate fluoridation, but it gave communities an opportunity to opt out of the requirement by a ballot issue. Wilmington's voters chose that exemption in a 701-429 vote. In recent months the issue of "opting in" has been discussed. An advisory vote will be held on November 8 to gauge public opinion.

Greenfield, MA – On October 12, Dr. John Fisher spoke to the Greenfield Board of Health about the benefits and support for community water fluoridation. The issue was brought to the attention of the Board of Health by the Community Health Center of Franklin County which indicated their staff has seen a significant rise in tooth decay in their service area. Greenfield has considered fluoridation twice since the 1980s. Water fluoridation in Greenfield would require approval from two-thirds of the Board of Health and then a petition signed by 10% of all registered voters within 90 days of the Board's action. From that point it would be placed on the public ballot. Should it fail on the public ballot, it cannot be reconsidered for two years.

Meadville, PA – Discussion continues on the best way to insure public input on the proposal to initiate fluoridation. In late October Meadville City Council members and city officials expressed confidence regarding those plans while also making clear that any decisions on fluoridation were the responsibility of Meadville Area Water Authority (MAWA), not the Meadville City Council. This followed a plea for assistance to the City Council from Clean Water Meadville which opposes fluoridation and hopes to play a role not just in any public forums on the topic but in the planning for such forums as well. The request was the result of a MAWA Operations Committee meeting on October 12. It was reported that no decisions on how to secure public input have been made at this time. MAWA Operations Committee meetings are closed to the public. Any recommendations from the Operations Committee would have to be voted on by the board at a public meeting.

Staff continues to provide assistance and/or monitor fluoridation activity in a number of additional communities in the U.S.

[ADA News stories](#) related to fluoridation activity are archived on ADA.org for your reference.

Fluoridation Votes Scheduled for November 8, 2016  
Kennebunk, Kennebunkport and Wells (KKW) Water District, ME  
Healdsburg, CA  
Wilmington, OH

### **State Update**

State Fluoridation Legislation Activity October 2016 – No bills are pending action.

### **National Update**

Released October 16, a [Water Research Foundation report](#) states drinking optimally fluoridated water is a good way to decrease the risk of tooth decay. The Water Research Foundation is a nonprofit research group supported by water utilities in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia and northern Asia. Additional details are available in an [ADA News story from October 22](#).

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