

To the Spokane City Council,

I am writing to express the American Dental Association's (ADA) support for community water fluoridation.

Fluoridation began in 1945 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, where studies showed a dramatic decline in tooth decay in school children. Since that time, numerous communities across the United States have implemented fluoridation programs. Today nearly 75% of the U.S. population served by public water supplies (more than 211.4 million people) has access to water with optimal levels of fluoride to prevent tooth decay.

Because of its contribution to the dramatic decline in tooth decay, fluoridation of community water supplies has been proclaimed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century. Fluoridation is safe, effective, economical and socially equitable in preventing tooth decay.

Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents at least 25% of tooth decay in children and adults, even with the widespread use of fluoride-containing products such as toothpaste. Simply by drinking water, people can benefit from fluoridation's cavity protection-regardless of age, education, race or socio-economic status.

Through decades of research and over 75 years of practical experience, fluoridation of public water supplies has been responsible for dramatically improving the public's oral health.

The ADA is truly gratified when, in the interest of the public's health and welfare, communities provide optimally fluoridated water to their residents.

The ADA provides detailed information about fluoridation at www.ada.org/fluoride. Should you have additional questions, please contact Ms. Tooka Zokaie at zokaie@ada.org

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this important community health issue.