

Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Fluoridation Fast Facts

(Coldwater, MI) In honor of National Dental Hygiene Month, the Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency is promoting community water fluoridation as a way to prevent cavities and improve oral health. Here are just five fast facts that support community water supply fluoridation:

- **Fast Fact #1: Fluoridation of the community water supply prevents tooth decay in children.** Many studies have been conducted throughout the nation and the world that demonstrate that children who live in areas with fluoridated water have 40% to 60% less dental cavities or related dental problems than children who live in areas with non-fluoridated water.
- **Fast Fact #2: Fluoridation of the community water supply benefits adults too.** A 2007 report examined 20 studies to estimate fluoride's impact on adult teeth and the report concluded that fluoridated water reduced dental decay by 27%.
- **Fast Fact #3: Fluoridation of the community water supply is the most inexpensive way to provide fluoride.** The average lifetime cost per person to fluoridate a water supply is less than the cost of one dental filling. For most cities, every \$1 invested in water fluoridation saves \$38 in dental treatment costs. In addition, the per-person annual cost of fluoride rinse program is roughly double the cost of fluoridated water. The per-person annual cost of fluoride supplements is more than 70 times higher than fluoridated water.

- **Fast Fact #4: Fluoridation of the community water supply is safe and effective.** For more than 65 years, the best available scientific evidence consistently indicates that community water fluoridation is safe and effective. Fluoridation of community water supplies has been endorsed by the American Dental Association, the American Medical Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Academy of Family Physicians, the World Health Organization, the Institute of Medicine and more than 125 national and international health and medical authorities.
- **Fast Fact #5: Fluoridation of the community water supply is common and growing.** In the United States, 73.9 percent of the population on public water systems receive fluoridated public water, or a total of 204 million people. This is an increase of almost nine percent from 2000.

According to Steve Todd, Health Officer for the tri-county agency “When you consider that there are more than 100 million Americans who lack dental insurance, fluoridation offers an easy, inexpensive preventive strategy that everyone benefits from simply by turning on their tap. It’s no wonder that fluoridation of the community water supplies has been lauded as one of the 10 leading public health achievements of the 20th Century.”

The health department, working in collaboration with Michigan Community Dental Clinics, Inc., offers comprehensive dental services for individuals with incomes below 200% of poverty (\$23,340 for an individual; \$47,700 for a family of four) who are without health insurance or are covered by Medicaid through its two dental clinics, located in Three Rivers and Hillsdale. To learn more about these clinics and services, call toll free: 877-313-6232; or visit the health department’s website at: www.bhsj.org and clinic on the ‘Dental Clinic’ button located on the left side bar of the page.

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