



# Community Water Fluoridation in Connecticut

## A Resource Guide for Water Operators

As water operators, you may receive inquiries from the public about Community Water Fluoridation (CWF) on a regular basis. This resource guide includes some basic information you can share with the public to help people better understand the importance of community water fluoridation and your role as water operators to ensure the proper fluoridation of the state's drinking water.

### The Basics

- Fluoride is a mineral that exists naturally in all bodies of water including surface water, groundwater, and ocean water.
- CWF is the process of adjusting the amount of fluoride in drinking water to a level recommended for preventing tooth decay (a.k.a. the optimal level).



### The Oral Health Benefits

- Fluoride is known to be safe and effective at preventing tooth decay by helping to build and strengthen the tooth's surface or enamel.
- Drinking optimally fluoridated water reduces cavities by up to 25% in children and adults, leading to less mouth pain, fewer fillings or teeth pulled, and fewer missed days of work/school.



### The Economic Benefits

- CWF saves communities and families money. Communities served by fluoridated water save an average of \$32 per person each year by avoiding treatment for cavities.
- Communities with fluoridated water need less expensive dental treatment.
- Communities of 1,000 or more people see an average estimated return on investment of \$20 for every \$1 spent on water fluoridation.





## The Local and National Prevalence

- In the United States, about 75% of people served by Public Water Systems (PWS) have fluoridated water.
- In Connecticut, 32 PWS with 106 treatment plants add fluoride to their drinking water.
- An estimated 2.4 million people (86%) in Connecticut receive optimally fluoridated drinking water from a public water system.



## How Water Operators Check the Fluoride Levels

- In Connecticut, water operators collect fluoride samples from PWS and report the sample results to the CT Department of Public Health's Drinking Water Section, which reviews the results to determine if the water is being fluoridated at the optimal level.
- Community and Non-Transient Non-Community public water systems must collect samples for fluoride every 3 years for groundwater systems and annually for surface water systems (or systems with groundwater under the direct influence of surface water sources).
- Systems that adjust the fluoride levels must collect daily readings for fluoride at each entry point to the distribution system.

To learn more about community water fluoridation, including additional information on the oral health benefits, the economic benefits, as well as other related topics, please visit:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/fluoridation/about/index.html>
- <https://ilikemyteeth.org/waterops/>

If you are interested in learning more about the fluoridation of Connecticut's water, please contact the CT Department of Public Health's Drinking Water Section at [DWDCCompliance@ct.gov](mailto:DWDCCompliance@ct.gov).

