



FOUNDATION FOR A  
HEALTHY  
KENTUCKY



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For over 70 years, public water providers in Kentucky have had a direct impact on improving the oral health of children and adults through community water fluoridation. Adding fluoride to community water supplies has significantly reduced the incidence of cavities, particularly among children and vulnerable populations who do not have access to regular dental care.

Community water fluoridation is a safe and cost-effective public health intervention that acts as a first line of defense for Kentucky communities to reduce the need for costly dental treatments, which can burden our dental provider network and individual households.

The dental workforce is already facing a shortage in every region of Kentucky and will experience increased pressure to address oral health needs should their communities opt out of fluoridation. Increased dental treatment needs could also result in more patients presenting with dental problems in Emergency Departments – which already costs Kentucky nearly \$45M annually.

Maintaining comprehensive community water fluoridation programs promotes a healthy, more engaged workforce. A higher prevalence of dental problems impacts Kentuckians' ability to work and learn, with employees missing more work to address their own dental treatment needs, or to support their children's needs, as kids are three times more likely to miss school when they have poor oral health.

In addition to the direct health benefits, water fluoridation contributes to significant cost savings for Medicaid and individuals without access to regular dental care. Estimates indicate that for every 10% of the population that loses access to fluoridated water, Medicaid costs will increase nearly \$20 Million annually to address increased dental treatment needs.

**Jeopardizing water fluoridation programs will lead to increased healthcare costs and disparities in oral health outcomes, particularly among low-income and underserved populations.**

Sincerely,

Delta Dental of Kentucky  
Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky  
Kentucky Dental Association  
Kentucky Dental Hygienists' Association  
Kentucky Oral Health Coalition

Kentucky Medical Association  
Kentucky Primary Care Association  
Kentucky Voices for Health  
Louisville Water Company