

## Mississippi Fact Sheet: Community Water Fluoridation

### The benefits of community water fluoridation:

- ❑ Water fluoridation is an effective, safe and inexpensive way to prevent tooth decay.
- ❑ Children and adults who are at low risk for tooth decay can stay cavity-free through frequent exposure to small amounts of fluoride in water.
- ❑ Water fluoridation prevents the loss of important minerals from tooth enamel in children and adults, and makes teeth resistant to tooth decay.
- ❑ Children in communities with water fluoridation experience 29% fewer cavities.
- ❑ Studies prove water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing dental decay by 20-40%, even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources, such as fluoride toothpaste.

### The benefits of having good oral health:

- ❑ Good dental health contributes to general health and well-being across the lifespan.
- ❑ Having good oral health reduces complications associated with diabetes, heart disease and stroke, and may reduce the risk for low birth weight and premature birth.
- ❑ Good oral health contributes to higher productivity in the workplace and decreased absenteeism at school.
- ❑ Good oral health enhances the pleasure of eating, improves self-esteem, and enhances social interactions.

### Did you know ...?

- ❑ In Mississippi, 63 percent, or about 3 in 5, third-grade children in public schools have experienced tooth decay; 31 percent have untreated dental needs, and 5 percent of children have an urgent need for dental care that can be life threatening. [Source: MSDH]
- ❑ In Mississippi, 35.1 percent, or about 1 in 3, persons aged 65 years or age or older have lost all their natural teeth. [Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)]
- ❑ In Mississippi, 2 in 5 adults (40.5%) have not seen a dentist within the last twelve months.
- ❑ Approximately 1.9 million Mississippians receive the benefits of fluoridated water; however, this represents 60.1 percent of those on public water systems. [Source: CDC]
- ❑ The Cities of Columbus, Laurel, Meridian, Newton, Calhoun City, New Albany, Como, Louisville, Corinth, Kosciusko, Cleveland, Durant, Carthage, Philadelphia, Marks, Forest, and the Towns of Lexington, Flora and Union and Crystal Spring Water Service implemented water fluoridation programs over 50 years ago. [Source: CDC]
- ❑ In Mississippi, the cost of water fluoridation is usually between one and two dollars per person per year and saves \$16-\$19 per person per year in dental treatment costs. [Source: MSDH/CDC]
- ❑ In April 2009, the Mississippi State Board of Health enacted a regulation that requires community water systems serving a population of at least 2,000 to acquire and install fluoridation equipment capable of maintaining fluoride levels within the optimal range as defined in the regulation.
- ❑ MSDH supports grants to public water systems for water fluoridation. Funding is awarded as it becomes available, and includes fluoridation equipment, housing (if needed), and water operator training.

For more information, call (601) 576-7690, or visit <http://www.HealthyMS.com>.