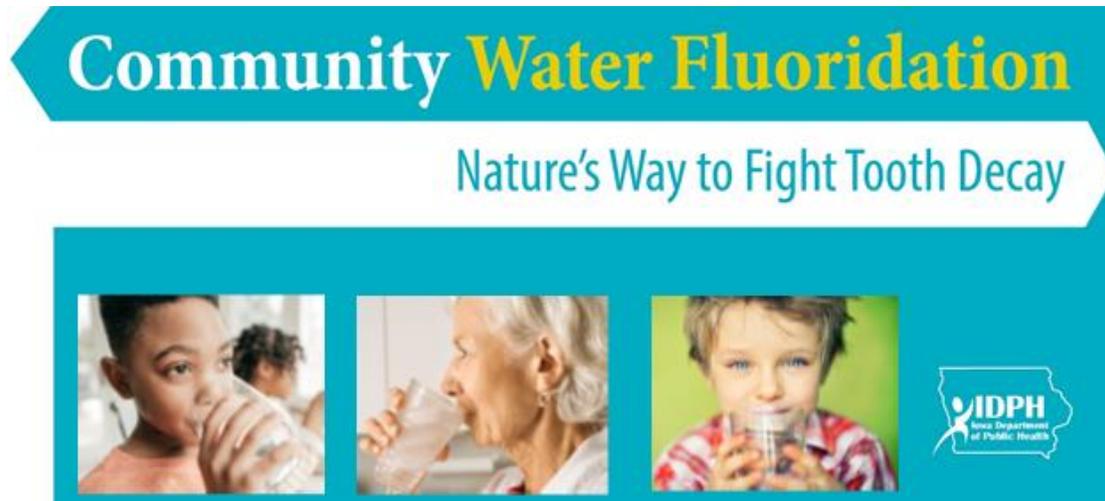


OPTIMAL COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION IN IOWA

Strategic Plan 2018-2023



Iowa Department of Public Health • Bureau of Oral and Health Delivery Systems
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Grant Project

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Introduction

Community water fluoridation (CWF) is the adjustment of natural fluoride levels in drinking water to a level that is recommended for the prevention of tooth decay. This public health intervention has been proven safe and effective, and has been named one of the 10 greatest public health achievements of the 20th century by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It has been shown that CWF prevents approximately 25% of tooth decay for all, regardless of income, education, or place of residence.

This CWF State Strategic Plan 2018-2023 outlines focus areas that will help increase the number of Iowans that have access to optimally fluoridated water. It was jointly developed by representatives from American Water Works Association – Iowa Chapter, Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation, Iowa Association of Water Agencies, Iowa Dental Association, Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Public Health Association, Iowa Rural Water Association, Local Public Health Services, State Hygienic Lab, University of Iowa College of Dentistry, and Washington County Health Department.

Iowa's CWF State Strategic Plan aligns with the following state and national goals and objectives:

Healthy People 2020:

Oral Health Objective 13: Increase the proportion of the U.S. population served by community water systems with optimally fluoridated water.

Healthy Iowans 2017-2021:

Lack of Oral Health/Dental Services Goal #1: All Iowans will have access to optimally fluoridated water.

Outcome Measures 2018-2023:

1. Increase the proportion of Iowans with access to optimally fluoridated water by 10 percentage points (64% to 74%).
2. Decrease the number of non-fluoridated water systems serving more than 1,000 people by 10 (70 to 60).
3. Increase the proportion of water systems submitting monthly reports to the Iowa Department of Public Health by 11 percentage points (89% to 100%).

Focus Area 1: Partnerships

Collaborate with partners to support expansion and sustainability of the state's Community Water Fluoridation (CWF) program

Strategies & Activities:

- Convene and lead a CWF Advisory Committee to develop and monitor strategies
 - Strengthen existing partners and recruit new partners to participate in the advisory workgroup
 - Conduct quarterly in-person and/or virtual meetings
 - Meet one-on-one with advisory committee members to seek specific input on state strategic and communication plans
- Seek new partners to increase program awareness and support
 - Collaborate with water professionals and organizations (e.g., chemical supply companies, engineering firms, equipment supply companies) to promote CWF to their clients
 - Educate school nurses and other medical professionals on the importance of CWF, empowering them to educate their patients
 - Provide annual data updates to all stakeholders including, Iowa Dental Association, Iowa Public Health Association, Iowa Dental Hygienists' Association, Iowa Department of Education, Iowa Rural Health Association, American Water Works Association, Iowa Rural Water Association, Iowa Association of Municipal Utilities, Iowa Association of Water Agencies, Iowa Water Utilities Board, Iowa League of Cities, State Association of Counties, Council of Governments, civic organizations like Lions Club and Rotary, public health administrators, boards of health, engineering firms and other stakeholders, as identified

Focus Area 2: Data Collection and Reporting

Implement a statewide system for CWF data collection and dissemination

Strategies & Activities:

- Continually monitor statewide fluoride levels to achieve an optimal dosage of 0.7 mg/L or higher
 - Investigate new data collection methods, including an online system with automatic input from Department of Natural Resources and/or water operators
 - Collect Monthly Operating Reports and follow-up with water operators to ensure the Department of Public Health receives reports from all systems that are adjusting fluoride levels
 - Input monthly data into the CDC Water Fluoridation Reporting System (WFRS)
 - Collect monthly split sampling data from the State Hygienic Lab
- Conduct ongoing analysis and dissemination of fluoride data
 - Create and disseminate annual census with fluoridation maps, to all stakeholders including water operators, city councils/water boards, dentists, policymakers, Department of Natural Resources, Advisory Committee, etc.
 - Disseminate annual CDC awards to water operators and cities through local I-Smile and I-Smile Silver Coordinators and/or regional IA-American Water Works Association meetings
 - Use data to monitor trends and track progress toward CDC, Healthy People 2020, and Healthy Iowans 2021 performance measures
 - Develop new comparison data sets using WFRS, TAVConnect, Medicaid, and Dental Health Professional Shortage Area data to correlate fluoride levels with decay rates, poverty levels, and access to dental care

Focus Area 3: Communication & Policy

Develop and implement communication strategies to change perception and increase awareness of the value of CWF

Strategies & Activities:

- Evaluate existing educational materials for improvements
 - Meet with Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Communication Coordinator to review CWF communication materials and strategies, including fact sheets, banners, toolkits, etc.
 - Conduct strategic planning session with CWF Advisory Committee for input on existing CWF outreach materials and seek ideas for new strategies
 - Research CWF materials from other states using state oral health program websites, Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD) listserv, and other best practice documents
- Develop and implement a five-year communication plan with new materials for a variety of stakeholders
 - Use ASTDD communication plan template(s) to develop five-year and annual goals that will include new key messages, audiences, and dissemination channels
 - Work with IDPH staff to ensure all materials meet oral health literacy and health equity goals
 - Increase public awareness of IDPH as a valuable resources for fluoridation education and information
- Monitor CWF communication plan for annual updates
 - Meet annually with IDPH Communications Coordinator to review current materials
 - Seek input from CWF Advisory Committee on current and new communication strategies
 - Collect feedback on community needs related to CWF from I-Smile and I-Smile Silver Coordinators through quarterly meetings and site visits

Focus Area 4: Infrastructure and System Development

Improve CWF Program infrastructure

Strategies & Activities:

- Maintain and advance IDPH Fluoridation Coordinator position
 - Identify professional development opportunities and have coordinator participate regularly, including National Oral Health Conference and state drinking water conferences
 - Work with IDPH Dental Director and fiscal staff to ensure ongoing funding for CWF position
- Conduct state and local quality improvement activities to enhance CWF program and capacity
 - Complete statewide fluoridation equipment needs assessment
 - Research fluoridation practices and policies in other states to identify opportunities for quality improvement in Iowa
 - When available, implement CDC Fluoride Learning Opportunity (FLO) training and establish continuing education credits for water operators and dental professionals
 - Provide technical assistance to water operators through Iowa Rural Water Association
 - Investigate opportunities to increase State Hygienic Lab split-sampling testing by water operators to ensure optimal fluoridation
- Explore additional funding sources for fluoride testing and equipment
 - Continue partnership with Delta Dental of Iowa Foundation to maintain grant funding for new or updates to fluoridation equipment
 - Work with the Department of Natural Resources and other stakeholders to increase access to Grants to Counties and State Revolving Fund programs