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HHS Issues Final Recommendation for Community Water Fluoridation
Adjusted Level Seeks to Maintain Dental Health Benefits of Fluoride

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) oral health program is pleased to announce that the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently released the final Public Health Service (PHS) recommendation for the optimal fluoride level in drinking water to prevent tooth decay.

The new recommendation is for a single level of 0.7 milligrams of fluoride per liter of water. It updates and replaces the previous recommended range (0.7 to 1.2 milligrams per liter) issued in 1962. The Office of Drinking Water and Municipal Assistance in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will continue to advise and assist community water systems to achieve this new recommendation.

In Michigan, the majority of the Public Water Systems adjust fluoride levels to be in line with this updated PHS community water fluoridation recommendation. Fluoridation of public water supplies in the United States began close to 70 years ago in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Currently, more than seven million Michigan residents have access to community water fluoridation to improve oral health.

HHS developed the new PHS recommendation for community water fluoridation because the availability of additional fluoride sources has made it possible to receive enough fluoride with slightly lower levels of fluoride in water. This change will maintain the protective decay prevention benefits of water fluoridation and reduce the occurrence of dental fluorosis.

“While additional sources of fluoride are more widely used than they were in 1962, the need for community water fluoridation still continues,” said U.S. Deputy Surgeon General Rear Admiral Boris D. Lushniak, M.D., M.P.H. “Community water fluoridation is effective, inexpensive and does not depend on access or availability of professional services.”

The U.S. Public Health Service Recommendation for Fluoride Concentration in Drinking Water for the Prevention of Dental Caries, was published on April 27, 2015 in *Public Health Reports* available online at www.publichealthreports.org.

“Promoting oral health is key to improving the overall health and wellness of our residents,” said Nick Lyon, director of MDHHS. “Community water fluoridation helps our residents achieve better oral health by providing safe and efficient access to this preventive health service.”

For more information about community water fluoridation, as well as information for health care providers and individuals on how to prevent tooth decay: www.cdc.gov/fluoridation. For information about water fluoridation in Michigan, visit http://www.michigan.gov/mdch/0,4612,7-132-2942_4911_4912_6226-267604--,00.html

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