Community Water Fluoridation
Policy Statement

CDA has a long history of supporting community water fluoridation and remains committed to increasing the number of Californians who enjoy the oral health benefits of fluoridation. Before CDA became involved in the effort to increase the number of Californians receiving fluoridated water, California ranked 47th with only 17 percent of the population receiving fluoridated water. Since CDA became involved in 1990, the number of Californians receiving fluoridated water has quadrupled, with the largest single increase occurring in 2007, when the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California brought fluoridated water to an additional 18 million people. Today, over 62% of Californians have access to community water fluoridation.

CDA began its support of community water fluoridation in 1990 by adopting a policy statement to support fluoridation. In 1995, CDA advanced community fluoridation throughout the state by sponsoring Assembly Bill 733, legislation that requires communities with 10,000 or more water connections to fluoridate when funding becomes available to do so. In 1998, the CDA Foundation formed a collaborative partnership with the Department of Health Services (now the Department of Public Health) and the Dental Health Foundation to administer a California Endowment grant to fund such projects. The Metropolitan Water District, City of Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Sacramento, Santa Clara County, Escondido, Santa Maria and Daly City are just a few of the communities that have benefited from this grant funding.

Nearly 100 national and international organizations recognize the public health benefits of community water fluoridation for preventing dental decay, including the American Dental Association, the U.S. Public Health Service, the American Medical Association, the World Health Organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the International Association for Dental Research, the National PTA and the American Cancer Society. In April 1999, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention proclaimed community water fluoridation as one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century.

Despite widespread support for the safety and efficacy of community water fluoridation, there continues to be controversy over this effective public health measure. Through legislative advocacy, and providing legal counsel and education of the public and decision-makers, CDA continues to support community water fluoridation efforts in California.

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