



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Public Health Service

Centers for Disease Control  
Atlanta GA 30333

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DEAR COLLEAGUE

We continue to be pleased and excited over the enthusiasm generated by the Dear Colleague letter. We appreciate very much your comments and especially your contributions and hope they will continue.

In this issue, we report on an especially thorough fluoridation promotional effort undertaken by Maine for that State's Children's Dental Health Month. As you can see from the article, almost no medium was left untouched in getting out the fluoridation message to the people of Maine.

Also in this issue is a description of a basic fluoridation engineering course and an advanced course on the same subject sponsored by the Dental Disease Prevention Activity and the State of Tennessee. The courses are held at the Tennessee State Department of Health's Operator Training School in Murfreesboro, Tennessee as the need arises. While the courses are designed primarily for State-employed engineers and/or State, county, and local technicians, we feel other professionals, such as dental directors, fluoridation program managers, etc., will also find the course information useful.

You will find additional information about the above subjects, as well as others, in the following pages. We hope you will find it both useful and interesting. Please continue to make known your suggestions so we can use them to continually improve our letter until we achieve our maximum effectiveness.

Sincerely,

William B. Bock, DDS  
Chief

Dental Disease Prevention Activity  
Center for Prevention Services

FLUORIDATION THEME OF CHILDREN'S DENTAL HEALTH MONTH IN MAINE

"Celebrate Your Smile with Fluoridation: Nature's Smile Maker" was the theme of this year's Children's Dental Health Month held in Maine in February.

The theme was publicized using several different media, including a banner hung from a building in direct view of Highway I-95, the major route from southern to northern Maine.

Radio and TV public service announcements focusing on fluoridation were developed and distributed, and a display on fluoridation was placed, during the month of February, in the Maine State Library. Similar displays were set up in malls and meeting sites throughout the State. At all displays, Consumer Reports information about fluoridation, as well as other materials on the subject, were distributed.

The importance of fluoridation was emphasized in a news release by the Maine Department of Human Services Commissioner which carried a policy statement he signed endorsing and promoting fluoridation.

Adding to the emphasis was an article printed in Dentaline newsletter, which was sent to 3,200 medical and dental students, as well as a host of other professionals statewide.

Children, an important audience, were not forgotten; a coloring page, containing the fluoridation theme and "Bruce the Dental Moose" (the office mascot) was distributed to over 250 schools, to dentists, physicians, pharmacists, public health nurses, and others.

For more information, contact:

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"CONSUMER REPORTS" ARTICLE FOCUSES ON DENTAL HEALTH

The March 1984 issue of Consumer Reports contains an 18-page report on dental health, which includes a thorough discussion of the effectiveness of fluorides and fluoridation.

About fluoride itself, the article states: "Among dental health experts, fluoride is widely regarded as the cornerstone of modern preventive dentistry."

About fluoridation, the article says: "Lifelong access to fluoridated drinking water imparts the fullest benefits.... Fluoridation is also the most economical way to provide fluoridation to everyone."

The means through which fluoride affords protection, fluoridation of school water supplies, and fluoride rinses are reviewed, as well as claims of the opposition to fluoridation among some groups.

The political opponents of fluoridation, the article says, claim "it poses hazards that, in fact, are not supported by any credible scientific evidence at all."

Other dental-related topics discussed in the issue are tooth decay, gum disease, toothpaste, dental irrigators, and mouthwashes.

#### FLUORIDE SUBJECT OF VIRGINIA NEWSLETTER

Pipeline, a quarterly newsletter produced and sent out with water bills by the Fairfax County Water Authority, recently featured fluoride as a topic of discussion.

In the article, the writers point out that, while the Fairfax County Water Authority uses sophisticated chemical feed and monitoring equipment at its treatment plants to assure that the proper amount of fluoride is added to the water, the process actually costs about seven cents per person per year.

"The fluoridation of drinking water has had a significant effect on the reduction of tooth decay among schoolchildren," the article says. "Tooth decay has dropped nearly a third in the past 10 years, according to a recent survey by the National Institute of Dental Research. Most of this drop can be attributed to the addition of fluoride in drinking water."

For more information, contact:

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Commonwealth of Virginia  
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Richmond, Virginia 23219

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#### WARNING LABEL TO BE CLARIFIED

Hach Company has been producing 1.00mg/l fluoride standard solutions to be used in standardizing fluoride testing equipment. On these solution bottles, there has been a warning label because the solution also contains formaldehyde.

A spokesperson in the company's Regulatory Affairs Office in Ames, Iowa has indicated that all future labels will include the statement that the warning refers to the formaldehyde, which is used as a preservative in the solution.

The old label read: "WARNING: May cause eye irritation. Do not ingest. In case of contact, flush with plenty of water. In case of ingestion, give large quantities of water or milk. Call physician immediately."

NOTE: Trade names are used for identification only. Use of such names does not represent endorsement by the Centers for Disease Control or the U.S. Public Health Service.

#### ADA ANNOUNCES SCIENCE WRITERS COMPETITION

The American Dental Association has announced its 1984 Science Writers Awards competition.

The purpose of the awards, according to an ADA brochure, is to encourage efforts to inform and educate the public about dental disease, dental treatment, and dental research.

The award program is operated in cooperation with and through the support of Lever Brothers Company.

An award of \$1,000 will be made for the best newspaper article and magazine article. The awards will be presented to the winners at the 125th annual session of the American Dental Association, October 20-23, 1984 in Atlanta. Air fare and per diem will be provided for the writers.

Certificates of merit may also be awarded in each category. Winners of certificates of merit will receive their awards by mail.

To be eligible for competition, an article must have been published in magazines or newspapers of general circulation. Entries to be judged must have been published between July 1, 1983 and June 30, 1984.

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No article will be considered which has been published in a dental or medical journal, or which has been written by employees of the American Dental Association or of Lever Brothers Company. Dentists and their family members are not eligible.

Entries will be judged on the basis of scientific accuracy, public interest, impact, clarity, and originality of presentation.

The judging panel will be composed of professionals from the fields of journalism, education, general science, and dentistry.

All entries must be received by August 15, 1984.

For an official entry form, write:

American Dental Association  
Science Writers Award Committee  
211 East Chicago Avenue  
Chicago, IL 60611

#### FLUORIDATION ENGINEERING COURSES SCHEDULED

A fluoridation engineering course has been scheduled for June 25-29 and again on October 15-19 at the Tennessee State Department of Health's Operator Training School in Murfreesboro, Tennessee (located 35 miles east of Nashville).

Sponsored by the Dental Disease Prevention Activity, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, and the State of Tennessee, the course is designed primarily for State-employed engineers and/or technicians who are involved with community or school water fluoridation. However, other personnel, i.e., State, county, and local dental directors, fluoridation program managers, and other involved in fluoridation programs would also benefit from the course.

The 5-day course provides training in a variety of areas, including: fluoridation and public health; water fluoridation practices; fluoride chemicals; fluoridation installation and operation; design of fluoridation systems; school fluoridation; fluoride equipment and chemical costs; and fluoridation systems--calculation and monitoring of fluoride levels.

The course contains both didactic and laboratory hands-on training, utilizing lectures, group discussion, and audiovisual aids.

There is no registration fee.

For additional information, contact Thomas G. Reeves, P.E., or Darrell H. Sanders, Fluoridation Engineers, Dental Disease Prevention Activity, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia 30333, 404/329-1833 (FTS: 236-1833).

#### ADVANCED FLUORIDATION ENGINEERING COURSE AVAILABLE

An advanced fluoridation engineering course is available, free of charge, through the Dental Disease Prevention Activity, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control.

Held annually, the course is cosponsored by the CDC and the State of Tennessee and focuses on the operation, maintenance, and trouble-shooting of fluoridation equipment. It is held at the Tennessee State Department of Health's Operator Training School in Murfreesboro, located 35 miles east of Nashville. There is no registration fee.

All course participants must have already completed the basic engineering course (described elsewhere in this issue).

The 5-day course provides training in a variety of areas, including fluoride analyzers, fluoride chemicals, solution feeders, saturators, dry feeders, venturi feeders, pacing meters, and auxiliary equipment.

Designed primarily for State-employed engineers and/or technicians who are involved with community or school fluoridation, course material is delivered through lectures and audiovisual aids presented by the technical representatives of the companies who manufacture fluoridation equipment.

No date has, as yet, been set for the next course, but those interested or who want more information, should contact Thomas G. Reeves, P.E., or Darrell H. Sanders, Fluoridation Engineers, Dental Disease Prevention Activity, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia 30333 (404/329-1833, FTS: 236-1833).

#### HOUSTON REMAINS FLUORIDATED

Houston's right to continue water fluoridation has been upheld by the Texas State Supreme Court, according to a report in the February 22 issue of the Houston Chronicle.

The Supreme Court, without issuing an opinion, affirmed a 1982 lower court opinion which upheld the 1980 ordinance allowing water fluoridation.

Challenges to the ordinance came from the Safe Water Foundation of Texas, which, the Chronicle said, claimed that adding fluoride to the water supply would amount to illegally introducing a poison.

Attorneys for the city argued that, by setting maximum allowable concentrations of fluoride in drinking water, State law implicitly permits the chemical to be added, so long as the statutory limit of 1.44 parts per million is not exceeded.

#### DENTAL SEALANTS DISCUSSED IN NIH COLUMN

"Sealants plus fluorides equal maximum tooth protection!"

So says a column designed for distribution to thousands of newspapers around the country by the National Institutes of Health. (NIH).

The article discusses the procedures through which dental sealants protect against cavities and the importance of convincing the public of the need to seek out this procedures.

Citing an opinion issued by participants in a Consensus Development Conference cosponsored by National Institute of Dental Research and NIH Office of Medical Applications of Research, the article states, "the consensus panel...overwhelmingly recommended that sealants be used in dental practice and public health programs to benefit all children."

The consensus panel was made up of biomedical investigators, dentists in private practice and in public health programs, academicians, a dental hygienist, and representatives from public interest groups.

For more information, contact:

Helen Ou, Editor  
NIH News Branch  
Building 31, Room 2B-10  
Bethesda, MD 20205

301/496-2535

#### JOURNAL ENDORSES FLUORIDATION

Fluoridation of water has been unanimously endorsed by the Board of Directors of the New England Water Works Association.

Reported in the December 1983 issue of the Journal of the New England Water Works Association, a formal statement adopted by the Board reads:

"In view of the endorsement and resolutions of the American Dental Association, the United States Public Health Service, and the American Water Works Association; also in view of the proven efficiency and cost savings attributed to fluoridation, the New England Water Works Association promotes the interest of and encourages the practice of fluoridation of public water supplies in conformance with the standards set by the regulatory agencies within the New England area."

The statement was included as part of the reported proceedings of the Treatment and Distribution Division of the New England Water Works Association.

#### FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Dental Disease Dear Colleague Letter is prepared for the Dental Disease Prevention Activity by Technical Information Services, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia 30333. Materials and suggestions for articles should be addressed to Caffilene Allen at the above address. Ms. Allen's phone number is 404/329-1819 (FTS:236-1819).

#### THE MEETING PLACE

Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors, Embassy on the Park--Sheraton, Kansas City, Missouri, June 17-20, 1984. For more information, contact Paul C. Reid, DMD, MPH, Director, Bureau of Dental Health, Missouri Department of Social Services, P.O. Box 570, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102.

National Fluoridation Conference, June 21-22, 1984, at Embassy on the Park--Sheraton, Kansas City, Missouri. For more information, contact Paul Turner, Deputy Chief, Dental Disease Prevention Activity, Center for Prevention Services, Centers for Disease Control, Atlanta, Georgia 30333.

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