

FLUORIDE TREATMENT OF DRINKING WATER

Since 1992, the City of Everett has added fluoride to the drinking water supply at an average dose of 1 milligram per liter (mg/L) based on Washington State Department of Health (WADOH) guidelines to maintain fluoride levels between 0.8 and 1.3 mg/L. We are now reducing the target dose to 0.8 mg/L. This is based on new recommendations from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and WADOH. Here are some frequently asked questions.

Q: Why does Everett add fluoride to drinking water?

A: Some water supplies contain naturally occurring fluoride. Everett's water source does not. Therefore, after a vote of the people, we began adding fluoride to the water supply in 1992 for dental health reasons. The amount of fluoride we add is based upon HHS and WSDOH recommendations.

Q: How have these recommendations changed?

A: HHS announced January 7, 2011, it will recommend water providers reduce fluoride levels to a range of 0.7 mg/L to 1.2 mg/L.

Q: Why were the changes recommended?

A: The new recommendation is based upon the latest science and reflects a more conservative approach at balancing the benefits fluoride provides in protecting teeth against the possible discoloring or white spots.

Q: Why is Everett Public Works fluoridating to a level of 0.8 mg/L, instead of the federally recommended dose of 0.7 mg/L?

A: WSDOH regulations currently require utilities that add fluoride to maintain a dose between 0.8 mg/L and 1.3 mg/L. In response to the new federal recommendation, WSDOH recommends water providers lower their fluoride dose to 0.8 mg/L and is evaluating a further reduction to 0.7 mg/L.

Q: Can the public express their opinion on this issue?

A: Yes. HHS will accept comments on this recommendation for 30 days beginning January 7, 2011. Comments can be sent to CWFcomments@cdc.gov.

More information about fluoride is available on the American Water Works Association website at <http://tinyurl.com/2fqwvh4>. For questions about your drinking, contact the City of Everett Public Works office at 425-257-8800.