



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Delta Dental Plans Association
1515 West 22nd Street
Suite 450
Oak Brook, Illinois 60523
Telephone 630-574-6001
Facsimile 630-574-6999

Contacts:
Kate Gerlesits, Delta Dental Plans Association
630-574-6994
kgerlesits@deltadental.com
or
Angela Feig, The Meyocks Group
515-327-3425
angelafeig@meyocks.com

82 million Americans live without fluoridated community water

Oak Brook, Ill. – Community water fluoridation has dramatically improved the oral health of our nation since its introduction in 1945. Today, however, 82 million Americans still do not have access to fluoridated water.¹

“Fluoridating municipal water supplies is one of the most effective ways to help decrease dental decay and chronic oral infections,” says Dr. Max Anderson, DDS, a national oral health advisor for Delta Dental Plans Association. “Fluoride reinforces and protects tooth enamel from the effects of bacteria that release acid and cause tooth decay.”

Communities with fluoridated drinking water in the U.S. have 15 to 40 percent less tooth decay.¹ Systematic fluoride, such as what is ingested with water, strengthens teeth from the inside. Topical treatments, such as fluoride toothpastes, gels or rinses, provide additional, immediate protection.

“Drinking fluoridated water, along with using fluoride toothpaste twice daily, delivers optimal levels of fluoride’s cavity-fighting protection,” says Dr. Anderson. “It’s important to talk with your dentist to make sure that you’re not getting too much or too little fluoride. Your dentist can make recommendations on adjusting your intake to optimal levels.” In excess, fluoride can cause tooth discoloration—a harmless condition called fluorosis.

Along with its oral health benefits, water fluoridation is also cost-effective. On average, fluoridation costs 72 cents per person per year in U.S. communities², while it saves from \$15.95 per person per year in a small community to \$18.62 per person per year in a larger community.³

Since 1990, it is estimated that water fluoridation has resulted in dental treatment cost savings of over \$25.7 billion. If the remaining 34 percent of the population would have had fluoridated water, the savings may have been an additional \$1.5 billion per year.⁴

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Dental Association (ADA) publish information on their Web sites about which communities fluoridate their water supplies. For people living in

communities where fluoride concentrations in drinking water have not been raised to recommended levels, dentists can prescribe fluoride supplements.

The not-for-profit Delta Dental Plans Association (www.deltadental.com) based in Oak Brook, Ill., is the leading national network of 39 independent dental service corporations specializing in providing dental benefits programs to 51 million Americans in more than 93,000 employee groups throughout the country.

#

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Water Fluoridation Statistics, 2006.

² The American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA): Fluoride Facts, 2003.

³ Journal of Public Health Dentistry, An Economic Evaluation of Community Water Fluoridation, 2001;61(2):78-86.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Fact Sheet: Preventing Dental Caries, 2002.