

# ORAL HEALTH NEVADA NEWSLETTER

*Vision: Empowering All Nevadans to have the best oral health possible.*



January - February 2015

**Oral Health Nevada Inc.** is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit charitable organization whose mission is to improve the oral health of all Nevadans - especially those who are the most vulnerable, by expanding access to affordable preventive and restorative services, promoting oral health education, and expanding communication and support through diverse partnerships.

## **Oral Health Nevada goes non-profit, earns 501(c)3 status**

It's official and we're so very excited!

Oral Health Nevada Inc. is a not-for-profit charitable organization according to the Internal Revenue Service. What does this mean? Contributions made to Oral Health Nevada are tax deductible. To learn more about Oral Health Nevada and how you can make a tax deductible contribution to improve the dental health of Nevadans, please visit our website at

## **Fluoridation Celebrates 70th Anniversary**

Community water fluoridation, the adjustment of the fluoride level in a public water system, began in Grand Rapids, Michigan, seventy year ago – on January 25, 1945.

Since that time, fluoridation has improved the dental health of residents living in cities and towns across the United States by preventing tooth decay (cavities). Fluoridation works in two ways – systemically and topically and therefore benefits everyone regardless of age. By ingesting fluoridated water, the fluoride becomes incorporated into the tooth's enamel as it's developing making it stronger; and once erupted into the mouth, less susceptible to the bacteria which can cause cavities. Its topical route is through saliva – once ingested, the fluoride is part of the saliva which is continually bathing the teeth, again, (re)strengthening the enamel of the teeth.

Even individuals living in communities that don't offer the health and economic benefits of water fluoridation can receive its protective benefits by consuming foods and beverages that are made with fluoridated water.

Water fluoridation costs a community pennies on the dollar to add to its public water system and it saves its residents several dollars in dental treatment costs. In fact, for every \$1 spent on water fluoridation, \$38 is saved in dental treatment costs.

Why is there still so much controversy about community water fluoridation? Misinformation is the primary reason for the continued debate – individuals and organized groups don't know the facts about water fluoridation in the US and reference studies using much higher levels of fluoride than are safe and effective to support their beliefs. These same individuals and groups take snippets of information - words and phrases out of context, and promote them as the truth instilling fear in others. Also, the internet doesn't discern for a user what information is fiction and what is credible, causing immense confusion among the general public.

Fluoridation added to public water systems at levels from 0.7ppm to 1.2ppm are safe and effective for the prevention of tooth decay. More and more cities and towns are adding fluoride to their water systems. (Cont'd on page 2)

## Fluoridation cont'd

Currently, 74.6% of the US population on public water systems, or a total of 210,655,401 people, have access to fluoridated water.

There are three types of fluoride that may be added to public water systems: 1. sodium fluoride; 2. sodium fluorosilicate; and 3. fluorosilicic acid. The type used depends upon the equipment and needs of each community. What's important to know is that all additives used by water treatment plants, including fluoride additives, must meet strict quality standards that assure the public's safety. These additives are subject to a stringent system of standards, testing, and certificates by American Water Works Association and the National Sanitation International. Both of these organizations are nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations.

More than 100 well-known health and professional organizations recognize the benefits of water fluoridation for the prevention of tooth decay including the Alzheimer's Association, American Cancer Society, American Dental and Dental Hygienists' Associations, American Medical and Nursing Associations, American Academy of Pediatrics and the March of Dimes.

### Fluoridation Facts

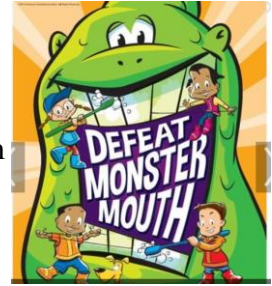
- Fluoride exists naturally in virtually all water supplies and even in various brands of bottled water; just not at optimal levels to prevent tooth decay.
- Numerous scientific studies and reviews have recognized fluoride as an important nutrient for strong healthy teeth.
- Very high fluoride concentrations can lead to a condition called fluorosis. Nearly all fluorosis in the US is mild - small white specks on teeth that only a dental professional could notice. Fluorosis does not cause pain, and does not affect the health or function of teeth.
- Getting enough fluoride in childhood will determine the strength of our teeth over our entire lifetime.
- Fluoridated water is safe for babies and young children. A 2010 study concluded, "No general recommendations to avoid use of fluoridated water in reconstituting infant formula are warranted." Resource: [www.ilikemyteeth.org](http://www.ilikemyteeth.org)

Using information from credible and reliable sources is important to understanding anything and everything, including community water fluoridation. Join us in celebrating 70 years of water fluoridation and better dental health by learning as much as you can about its health and economic benefits.

## February is National Children's Dental Health Month "Defeat Monster Mouth"

Each February the American Dental Association (ADA) sponsors Children's Dental Health Month to raise awareness about the importance of oral health. *Tooth decay is the number one chronic disease among children and can lead to poor nutrition, speech problems, missed school, poor self-esteem and severe medical complications.*

The ADA makes many of the resources including posters, classroom presentations, and coloring sheets available for dental professionals, and parents free of charge on their website at [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)



## Heart Health - Dental Health

Cardiovascular disease, including heart disease, stroke and high blood pressure is the number one killer of men and women in the US. In fact, about 600,000 people die of cardiovascular disease each year and it costs more than \$300 billion annually.

Studies have documented a relationship between poor dental health – specifically gum disease with heart attack and stroke. Bacteria from the mouth can enter the bloodstream from the gums and have been found in clumped artery plaques, causing inflammation and blockages. A study published in the *Journal of the American Heart Association* that followed 657 people without known heart disease found that people who had higher blood levels of certain disease-causing bacteria in the mouth were more likely to have atherosclerosis (blockages) in the carotid artery in the neck.



Preventing heart disease includes following physician's orders and taking medications as prescribed, taking a brisk 10-minute walk - 3 times a day/5 days a week, eating a healthy diet – low in salt and fat, rich in fresh fruits and vegetables, no tobacco use, and twice-daily brushing and flossing and regular professional dental care. For more information go to [www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts](http://www.cdc.gov/heartdisease/facts)

Ask us about **DONATING** to Oral Health Nevada Inc. or go to [www.oralhealthnevada.com](http://www.oralhealthnevada.com)