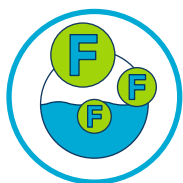




# FLUORIDE

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### DOES THE CITY OF PHOENIX ADD FLUORIDE TO THE TAP WATER SUPPLY?

Yes. In June 1990, the addition of fluoride to the City's water treatment process was approved by the City Council and Mayor. This decision was based on public input, recommendations from numerous federal, state and local public health officials including the Surgeon General of the U.S. Public Health Service and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and decades of research supporting fluoridation as a safe and effective method for reducing the number of dental cavities.



### WHY IS FLUORIDE ADDED TO OUR TAP WATER SUPPLY?

Fluoride is a naturally occurring element in the source water for the City of Phoenix, with natural source water fluoride levels at about 0.3 parts per million. Phoenix adds fluoride in the treatment process to raise the level to 0.7 parts per million, the optimal level recommended for all water systems by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to achieve dental benefits. That 0.7 equals about two drops in a 55-gallon barrel. Fluoride is used in public water systems and in many products associated with oral hygiene to prevent tooth decay.



### IS FLUORIDE IN THE WATER SUPPLY REGULATED?

Fluoride is regulated under the Safe Drinking Water Act by the EPA for Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL). The City of Phoenix performs routine monitoring for fluoride and many other compounds in the water supply. This data is reported on an annual basis in the Water Quality Report which is distributed to water customers and is available online. While the levels of fluoride within the water distribution system can fluctuate due to a variety of factors including the influence of groundwater which can contain naturally occurring fluoride, the amount of fluoride delivered by Phoenix is well below both the current EPA's enforceable MCL and non-enforceable secondary standards for fluoride of 4.0 and 2.0 mg/L. If the EPA determines it is necessary to revise the regulations regarding fluoride, Phoenix will comply with those updated regulations, as it has in the past.



### IS ADDING FLUORIDE TO THE WATER SUPPLY SAFE?

Since 1950, the American Dental Association (ADA) has strongly endorsed the fluoridation of community water supplies as safe, effective and necessary in preventing tooth decay. The

Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) Office of Oral Health also strongly promotes and supports the addition of fluoride to drinking water as a decay prevention additive.

The 0.7 parts per million of fluoride Phoenix delivers to customers in its tap water is nowhere close to the 4.0 Maximum Contaminant Level established by the EPA. Some people who drink water containing fluoride in excess of 4 parts per million over many years could get bone disease, including pain and tenderness of the bones. Fluoride in drinking water at 2 parts per million or more may cause mottling of children's teeth, usually in children less than nine years old. Mottling, also known as dental fluorosis, may include brown staining and/or pitting of the teeth, and occurs only in developing teeth before they erupt from the gums.



## DO OTHER CITIES FLUORIDATE THEIR TAP WATER?

Yes. According to the 2022 National Water Fluoridation Statistics, 72.3% of the U.S. population served by a public water system receives fluoridated water. In Arizona, 57.5% of those served by a public water system are receiving fluoridated water. According to ADHS, seven cities in the state add fluoride: Chandler, El Mirage, Gilbert, Glendale, Mesa, Phoenix, and Tempe. Several other communities statewide have optimal, naturally occurring levels of fluoride and need no additional fluoridation.



## WHAT IS THE COST OF FLUORIDATING PHOENIX'S TAP WATER?

The total annual cost of fluoridating the City of Phoenix drinking water is approximately \$179,000. The City estimates the annual cost to ratepayers associated with fluoridation is \$0.43 cents per customer account. According to the CDC, communities with fluoridated water save an average of \$32 per person a year by avoiding treatment for cavities.

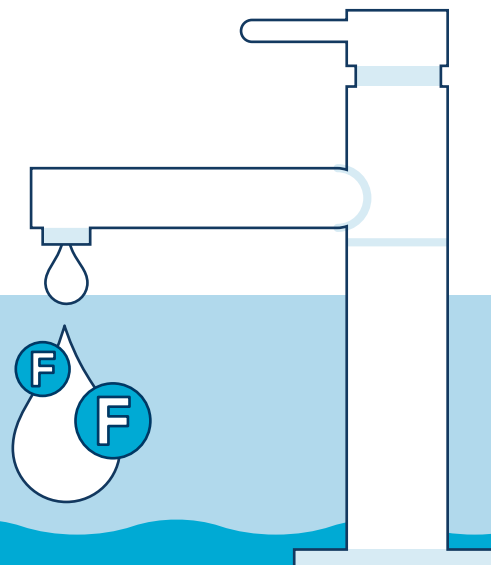


## WHERE CAN I FIND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ABOUT FLUORIDE?

To review City of Phoenix fluoride levels, please visit the current Water Quality Report: [phoenix.gov/waterservices/waterquality/water-quality-reports](https://phoenix.gov/waterservices/waterquality/water-quality-reports)

For additional information about community water fluoridation, call your dentist or visit the ADHS Office of Oral Health: [azdhs.gov/prevention/womens-childrens-health/oral-health/index.php](https://azdhs.gov/prevention/womens-childrens-health/oral-health/index.php)

## FLUORIDE FAQ



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