October 25, 2014
Water Utility Administrative Office
119 E. Olin Avenue
Madison, WI 53713

Dear Water Utility Administrative Office:

I am writing on behalf of Madison Utility's review of the fluoridation policy. Fluoridation of community water supplies has been proclaimed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention as one of 10 great public health achievements of the 20th century. According to the best available scientific evidence fluoridation is safe, effective and economical in preventing tooth decay. Today, three in four Americans benefit from fluoridated water, which is more than 204 million people. Our residents should join the growing number of people who enjoy the decay-preventing benefits of fluoridation.

Fluoridation saves money. On an individual basis, the lifetime cost of fluoridation is less than the cost of one dental filling. For communities, every $1 invested in water fluoridation saves $38 in dental treatment costs. The yearly cost to fluoridate our community per person per year is estimated to be 50 cents, according to Wisconsin Department Health Services, Division of Oral Health.

Studies show that community water fluoridation prevents at least 25 percent of tooth decay in children and adults, even with the widespread use of fluoride-containing products such as toothpaste. Simply by drinking water, people can benefit from fluoridation's cavity protection – regardless of age, education, race or socio-economic status.

As a dental hygienist, my first concern is my patients' health. I provide free access to dental services to people with low socioeconomic status. It's difficult to watch people suffer needlessly from cavities that could have been prevented with access to fluoridated water. Fluoride toothpaste and fluoridated water deliver a one-two punch in the fight against cavities.

The bottom line is that community water fluoridation remains the single most effective public health measure to prevent tooth decay. That is why organizations such as the Dane County Oral Health Coalition, the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA), the American Dental Association (ADA) as well as more than 100 other international organizations recognize the public health benefits of fluoridation. The Healthy People 2020 goal is to increase the percentage of the population served by fluoridated community water systems to 79.6 percent.

Sincerely,

Chelsey Kilmer, RDH

Madison Dental Initiative
Dane County Oral Health Coalition
Wisconsin Oral Health Coalition
Wisconsin Dental Hygienists' Association
American Dental Hygienists' Association