October 10, 2014

Dear Ms. Gotkowitz and Members of the Water Utility Board,

It has come to my attention that the Madison Water Utility Board will be reviewing their fluoridation policy statement at the October 28th meeting and that it will be open for public comment. Prior to this meeting, there are a few facts about community water fluoridation that I hope you will take the time to consider. Fluoridation of community water supplies is considered one of the most significant public health advances of the 20th century and one of the safest, most cost-effective ways to increase overall oral health. Since its introduction over 65 years ago, fluoridation has dramatically improved the dental health of tens of millions of Americans.

As a resident of Madison, I ask you to please consider:

- Studies clearly demonstrate water fluoridation continues to be effective in reducing dental decay by 30-50% for children and adolescents (27% for adults), even in an era with widespread availability of fluoride from other sources. Community water fluoridation benefits everyone, especially those without access to regular dental care.
- Under the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Environmental Protection Agency has established drinking water standards for a number of substances, including fluoride, to protect the public's health. The Food and Drug Administration has also approved bottled water with optimal levels of fluoride for public consumption.
- Fluoride toothpaste alone is insufficient, hence why pediatricians and dentists alike prescribe fluoride tablets to children residing in non-fluoridated communities. Fluoride tablets can be a challenge as families don't always remember to continue taking them so the benefits are lost while the cost is still incurred. Studies have shown that communities that fluoridated water have a lower rate of tooth decay than non-fluoridated communities.
- The maximum reduction in tooth decay occurs when fluoride is available before the teeth erupt (systemically) and after teeth erupt (topically). Residents who receive the benefits of water fluoridation experience approximately 30+ percent less tooth decay.
- Every $1 invested in water fluoridation saves $38 in dental treatment costs for most cities.

On behalf of all the adults and children living in Madison, I urge you and your fellow board members to continue to support your fluoridation policy statement and maintain fluoridation in the municipal water system.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Northey

See attached

I'm a resident of Madison. I'm also the only person in our 4-person household who did not grow up with fluoride in my drinking water. I grew up on a Wisconsin dairy farm and drank lots of milk as a child, but that didn't save me from tooth decay on a big scale. I have lots of tooth decay that has resulted in many deep fillings and multiple crowns at age 71.

In contrast, my 67-year old husband grew up in Madison with fluoride in the water. He has no cavities, flosses only occasionally and always has good checkups.

Our 2 sons, now in their 40s, also have no or very few cavities. Every time they see a dentist in a different city, they always get told that it's obvious they grew up in a town that had fluoride in the water.

In my experience, fluoride is a great benefit. One of our sons has to have antibiotics before getting dental work, and because he has great teeth, he only gets annual cleanings that require the antibiotics.

In my experience, it would be a really bad idea to eliminate fluoride from Madison's water.

A very concerned citizen...

Sylvia Northey
1115 Merrill Springs Rd.
Madison WI 53705