



Fluoridation Statistics Guidance

Public Health Dental Program
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The Public Health Dental Program (PHDP) leads the Florida Department of Health's efforts to improve and maintain the oral health of all persons in Florida. The PHDP has four primary functions. It provides a statewide direction for policy related to oral health issues; promotes and administers oral health education and preventive dental programs; collects and analyzes data on oral health; and supports the provision of direct dental care services through the county health departments (CHDs) and other public and private organizations. The PHDP collaborates with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to gather the necessary information to report fluoridation information in Florida. This guidance document summarizes how community water fluoridation data are collected, categorized and made available to the public through the Florida Community Health Assessment Resource Tool Set (CHARTS) and PHDP's websites.

The level of measurement for water fluoridation is the public water system. Currently, there are more than 6,500 public water systems in Florida, varying in size and population served. DEP retains responsibility for collecting information on all public water systems across the state and providing each public water system with a unique ID (identification) number. DEP also estimates the population served, which is largely dependent on the population per service connection. The population served has the potential to fluctuate annually. These population estimates are aggregated and used by the PHDP to report county-level statistics.

The PHDP reports data only for those public water systems that have been designated as a "community water system." A community water system is a public water system that serves at least 15 service connections used by year-round residents or regularly serves at least 25 year-round residents. In 2018, there were an estimated 1,622 water systems in Florida, each serving between 25 and 2.3 million residents. Local communities make the decision whether or not to add fluoride to their drinking water, thus fluoridation status varies by system.

The calculation of statewide fluoridation statistics is a complex, multi-step process that requires data to be aggregated from both the DEP and the PHDP. In order to report all community water systems that provide fluoridated water, categories 1-3 below must be combined.

The categories of fluoridation status assigned to a community water system are the following:

1. Natural – naturally fluoridated; this information is collected by the PHDP
2. Adjusted – adding fluoride to the water; this information is collected via Monthly Operational Reports (MORs) which are submitted to the PHDP
3. Consecutive – buying water from a fluoridated system; this information is collected by DEP. For the purpose of this data, any system that buys water from a fluoridated consecutive system is also deemed fluoridated.
4. Non-fluoridated – has no fluoride or minimal amounts of fluoride; this information is collected by the DEP and the PHDP

Note: Fluoridation categories 1-3 are not mutually exclusive and thus community water systems can fall into multiple categories.

Fluoridation data are available at the following websites:

- www.FloridaCHARTS.com – *Florida CHARTS* provides county level estimates of the population percentage with access to fluoridated water from community water systems.
- www.flhealth.gov/dental/fluoridation – The PHDP's website provides the list of all Florida's community water systems in each county, their fluoridation status, and the population they served.
- https://nccd.cdc.gov/DOH_MWF/Default/Default.aspx - *My Water's Fluoride* provides water fluoridation status at the public water system level for all states and counties in the United States. Although maintained by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), this website is dependent on annual data submission by the individual state.