

FACT SHEET



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FLUORIDATION



What is fluoridated water?

Water is generally regarded as fluoridated if in each litre there is a milligram of fluoride (referred to as 1 mg per litre). That is, 1 millionth of each litre is fluoride.

Most naturally occurring water contains some fluoride, particularly if it is from underground. For example, water supply to the township of Holbrook has a natural fluoride content of 1mg per litre.

Some Wagga Wagga waters contain 50% to 80% of this desired fluoride content, and so Riverina Water only need add a small amount more to bring it to the desired level.

Why add fluoride to the water?

Fluoride is added to drinking water to protect teeth against decay. The dosing level is tested daily by operators to maintain 0.8-1.2Mg/L and is monitored by the NSW Department of Health. Anyone involved with fluoride must have a certificate issued by NSW Health.

In the Riverina Water area of supply all areas except for Oura, Collingullie, Tarcutta, Humula, Rand, Morundah, Walbundrie and Woomargama have fluoride. Constant overdosing of fluoride can result in a condition called fluorosis. The dosing of fluoride is not a legal requirement but is highly recommended by the Australian Dental Association and NSW Department of Health.

Dental experts throughout the world agree that if drinking water contains the above levels of fluoride, there will be a significant reduction in tooth decay in children. Tooth decay will also be reduced in their adult life.

Fluoride forms a protective coating around the teeth, increasing the strength of tooth enamel.

Is fluoride safe?

Fluoride is widely dispersed in the environment and is present in most foodstuffs. As previously mentioned, it also quite often occurs naturally in water. At the levels mentioned above, fluoride is perfectly safe.

The addition of fluoride to the water is regulated by the NSW Health Department and legislated guidelines must be followed. The fluoride is added in strictly controlled amounts and final water quality is monitored every day.

Are all Riverina Water supplies fluoridated?

Not all our waters are fluoridated.

Fluoridated waters are in Wagga Wagga, San Isidore, Ladysmith, Mangoplah, Pleasant Hills, Holbrook, the Bulgary, Lockhart, Urana, Oaklands system, and the Wagga Wagga - Walla Walla and Wagga Wagga - Milbrulong rural systems.

Those locations **not fluoridated** are Oura, Collingullie, Tarcutta, Humula, Rand, Morundah, Walbundrie, Woomargama.

If you live in a non-fluoridated area, your dentist can advise on the most appropriate way to gain the tooth protection offered by fluoride.



Severe fluorosis



Riverina Water County Council can be contacted on telephone 02 69220608 and we have a Web Site at www.rwcc.com.au