

# [News story: PHE publishes water fluoridation health monitoring report](#)

Public Health England (PHE) has today published its [Water fluoridation: health monitoring in England 2018 report](#) on behalf of the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care.

Public Health England (PHE) has a duty under the Water Industry Act 1991 to monitor the effects of fluoride on people living in areas covered by water fluoridation schemes on behalf of the Secretary of State. PHE will report on this at least every 4 years.

Today's is the second such report; the first was published in March 2014. The findings of both the 2014 and 2018 reports are consistent with the view that water fluoridation is an effective and safe public health measure.

Professor John Newton, Director of Health Improvement at PHE, said:

The evidence in this report shows water fluoridation is a safe and effective method to reduce tooth decay, especially among deprived communities. We would encourage local authorities to consider this evidence carefully when deciding on their plans to improve dental health in their areas.

The report found:

- 5-year-olds in areas with water fluoridation schemes were much less likely to experience tooth decay, and less likely to experience more severe decay than in areas without schemes
- the chances of having a tooth/teeth removed in hospital because of decay were also much lower in areas with water fluoridation schemes
- children from all areas benefited from fluoridation, but children from relatively deprived areas benefited the most
- dental fluorosis, at a level that may affect the appearance of teeth, was observed in 10% of children/young people examined in 2 fluoridated cities; however, there was no difference between children and young people surveyed in fluoridated and non-fluoridated cities when asked about their opinion on the appearance of their teeth, taking into account concerns which have resulted from any cause (for example, poor alignment, decay, trauma or fluorosis)

- taken alongside the existing wider research, our results do not provide convincing evidence of higher rates of hip fracture, Down's syndrome, kidney stones, bladder cancer, or osteosarcoma (a cancer of the bone) due to fluoridation schemes

The [Water fluoridation: health monitoring report for England 2018](#) report is available online. The next report will be due by March 2022 at the latest.