



DEPARTMENT of ENVIRONMENT
and NATURAL RESOURCES

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FOR MORE ABOUT FLUORIDE: <http://denr.sd.gov/des/dw/Fluoride.aspx>

DENR Reduces the Amount of Fluoride Required in Drinking Water

PIERRE, S.D. – The Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) has revised a state rule to reduce the levels of fluoride required in drinking water. The new rule stipulates a recommended range of 0.5 to 0.9 parts per million (ppm) of fluoride with an optimal level of 0.7 ppm.

The rule revisions were based on a federal Health and Human Services recommendation to reduce the fluoride standard from a range of 0.7 to 1.2 ppm to an optimal level of 0.7 ppm. This is the first time the federal standard has changed since 1962.

Fluoride is a naturally occurring element in all South Dakota water supplies. Drinking fluoridated water keeps teeth strong and reduces tooth decay.

“This new lower fluoride level in drinking water is good news for people in South Dakota,” said DENR Secretary Steve Pirner. “The new lower fluoride level still protects oral health, but at the same time cuts chemical costs for drinking water systems by more than \$400,000 per year.”

The rules requiring fluoridation of water apply to public water systems that serve populations of 500 or more people.

Under the old rule, 77 public drinking water systems in South Dakota have been required to add fluoride to their water to bring the levels up to the recommended range. Under the new rule, approximately 25 of those systems will be able to stop adding fluoride because the natural levels in their raw water will meet the new lower range. The remaining 52 systems will have to continue to add fluoride, but they will not have to add as much to meet the new lower level.

During the rules adoption process, two commenters were opposed to adding any fluoride to drinking water. But the new rule was supported by the SD Dental Association, Delta Dental, American Dental Hygienists’ Association – SD, and Community Healthcare of the Dakotas due to the benefits of fluoridation in preventing tooth decay.