



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH &
SENIOR SERVICES**

Health.Mo.Gov

Julie Boeckman, Chief
Office of Dental Health



**Oral Health Is
Overall Health**



PREVENTING TOOTH DECAY— Why is it important throughout life?

- Children and adults with poor dentition can't eat a healthy diet due to difficulties chewing.
- Abscessed (infected) teeth can spread bacteria to the brain leading to death.
- Poor oral health may limit your ability to successfully get a job; dental pain makes it hard to work or concentrate in school.
- Nationally children miss **51 million school-hours annually** due to dental-related issues.

Importance of Oral Health Care

- **Oral and overall health, and disease are closely interconnected**
- **Oral infections make other disease processes worse**
- **Chronic disease very often has oral signs occurring early in the disease process which may help in diagnosis**

Oral Systemic Connection

The diagram illustrates the 'Oral Systemic Connection'. A large teal shape on the left contains the title. A circular path of six rounded rectangular boxes surrounds the center, connected by a light blue circular arrow. The boxes are: Alzheimer's Disease (teal), Diabetes (yellow), Adverse Pregnancy Outcomes (orange), Atherosclerotic Coronary Artery Disease (teal), Colorectal Cancer (yellow), and Respiratory Infections Nursing Home Acquired Pneumonia (NHAP) (teal).

Alzheimer's Disease

Diabetes

**Adverse Pregnancy
Outcomes**

**Atherosclerotic
Coronary Artery
Disease**

Colorectal Cancer

**Respiratory
Infections Nursing
Home Acquired
Pneumonia (NHAP)**

Snapshot of Oral Health in Missouri - 2023

- 71,222 dental screenings/reviews were completed through Missouri's Preventive Services Program
- 14.3% of Medicaid eligible children aged 1-2 years received preventive dental services
- 76.8% of the population served by community water systems receive fluoridated water
- 12.3% of Missouri adults (18 and older) have been diagnosed with Diabetes

Tooth decay is the most frequent childhood disease, but it's also the most preventable.



Missouri School Chronic Health Condition Statistics

- 23.7% Untreated decay (PSP)
- 32.01% Treated decay (PSP)

Compared to prevalence of chronic health conditions as reported by schools

- 17.7% Mental health
- 9.0% ADD/ADHD
- 7.6% Asthma
- 3.5% Anxiety
- 3.3% Life threatening allergies
- 0.33% Diabetes

Office of Dental Health's Mission

- Promote optimal oral health,
- Improve access to dental care, and
- Reduce all forms of dental disease for Missourians

With your help, we will be able to continue to move the needle to improve oral and overall health for Missourians.

ODH Programs

- Preventive Services Program (PSP)
- Community Water Fluoridation Training, Equipment Repair and Replacement
- Workforce shortage
- Tele-dentistry in nursing homes and increasing dental services for veterans
- Evidence-Based Preventive Services (sealants & water fluoridation)
- Medical--Dental Integration (Diabetes)
- Infection Prevention and Control
- Elks Mobile Dental Program and Donated Dental Program
- Education and outreach

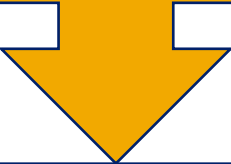
Preventive Services Program (PSP)

- Oral health education
- Oral health review (0-18 years of age)
- Fluoride varnish application (2)
- Free toothbrush, toothpaste, and floss
- Referrals



Impact of PSP and Fluoride Varnish

Fluoride varnish dramatically reduces children's dental decay.



For children who do not receive fluoride varnish -



More than twice as likely to have decay as those who received a yearly application of fluoride varnish.

Almost four times as likely to have decay as those who received fluoride varnish applications at six-month intervals.

Preventive Services Program (PSP)

**71,222 children
served during 2023-
2024 school year**

**More professions
can conduct oral
health review**

**Four percent
decrease in dental
decay from 2014 to
2022**

**Screenings at
Missouri State
Schools for
Severely Disabled
(MSSD)**

THANK YOU
for helping with PSP

NEW this year, ODH will host Office Hours to help support our schools and volunteer community!

Held every Thursday from 1:00 – 2:00 PM.

If you are interested in receiving the meeting link, please email oralhealth@health.mo.gov.

Open to school nurses and administration, LPHA staff, and other volunteers.

Hear program updates, share barriers and learn from peers on what is working.

America's Health Rankings

Missouri 41st in Dental Visit for Women—

- 43.4% of Missouri Medicaid participants do not use pregnancy dental benefits.
- Comprehensive dental care for pregnant women up to **one-year post-partum.**



- Encourage LPHAs to -
- Provide pregnant women with oral health education and prevention tips.
- Make dental appointment at clinic.
- Educate obstetricians on importance of dental care during pregnancy.

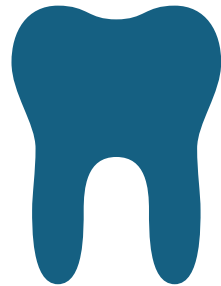
“If gum inflammation is treated during pregnancy, the risk of a baby being born preterm is reduced by approximately 50 percent.”

Professor Joerg Eberhard

Missouri Coalition for Oral Health promoting and educating dental providers on Medicaid

	FY22	FY23	Increase
Enrolled Total Participants	1,448,416	1,621,131	172,715
Unique Billing Dental Providers by NPI	743	845	102
Unique Participants Served	344,119	394,299	50,180
Participants Served Less than 21 Years of Age	271,456	294,872	23,416
Participants Served Age 21 Years and Older	73,027	100,146	27,119*

*Totals take in to account participants whose turned 21 within the timeframe



Increase of Medicaid dental providers.



Increase of Medicaid recipients receiving dental services.

COMMUNITY WATER FLUORIDATION (CWF)

CWF decreases decay by 25% in all citizens regardless of income or other socio-economic factors.



Community Water Fluoridation



National Toxicology Program (NTP) Report

Conclusion based on studies where fluoride levels exceeded 1.5 ppm and excluded other known contributors to lower IQ (socioeconomic status, genetics, nutrition, etc.).

Report and addendum “do not address whether water fluoridation as in the U.S. and Canada (0.7 mg/L) is associated with a measurable effect on IQ.”



EPA federal case

The ruling refers to fluoridated water as having an “unreasonable risk” based on the NTP report.

The judge said “did not conclude fluoridated water is harmful.”

Tasked EPA to take “action” to further evaluate potential health risks.

The EPA has filed an appeal against the judge’s decision.



Cochrane Report

CWF may not be as helpful as previously thought, especially if not done on optimal level.

Excluded more recent studies as they were approved for publication after the report’s cutoff date for inclusion.

Co-author, Dr. Anne-Marie Glenny said, “contemporary studies are showing that water fluoridation is beneficial.”



Department of Natural Resources

Continue as usual until more information is received from the EPA.

90-day notification rule remains in place and all current regulatory requirements stay the same.

Missouri's Current Fluoridation Statistics

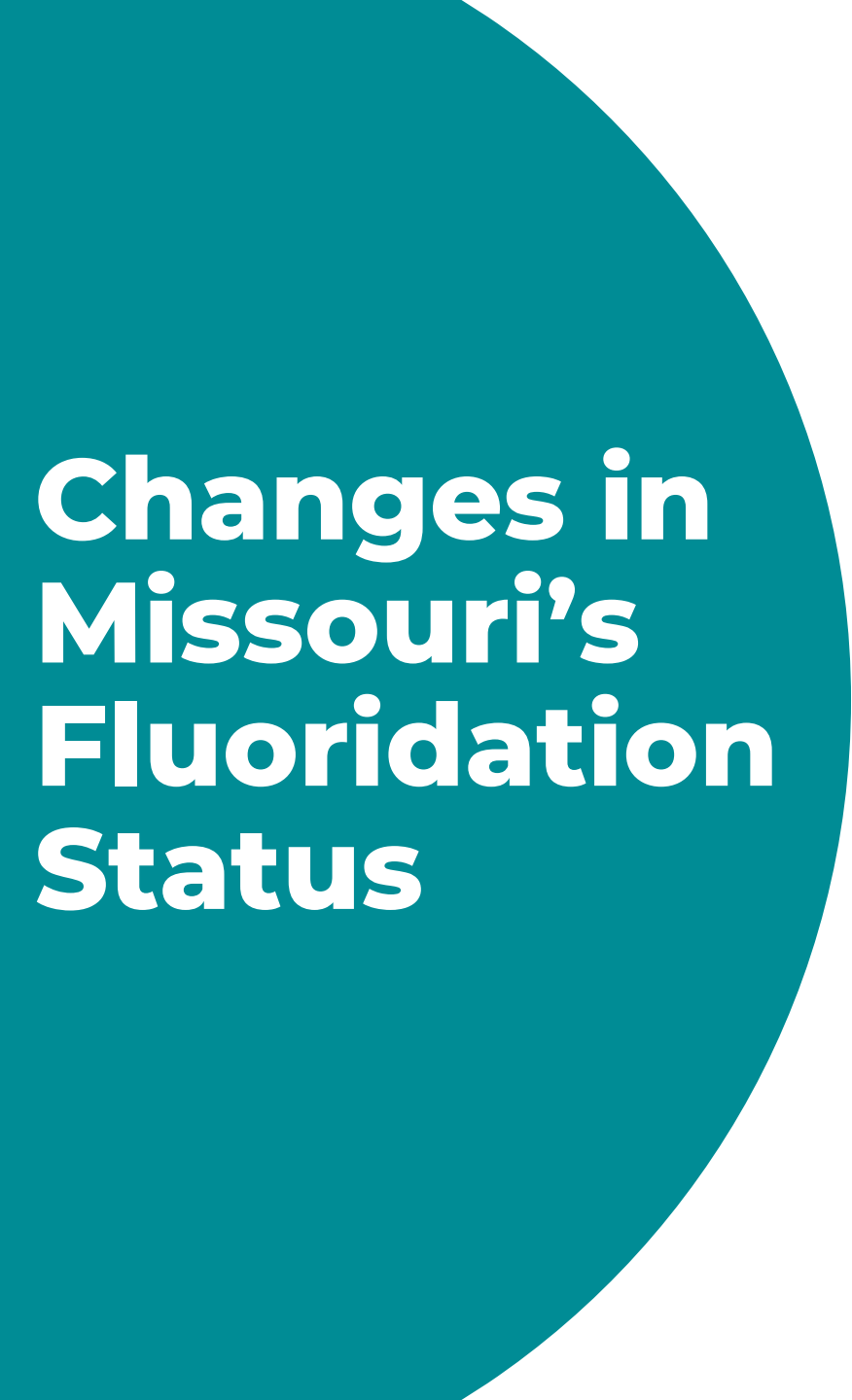
Missouri has **390 water systems** that either have natural fluoride levels at 0.6 mg/L or higher or adjust fluoride levels.

Missouri has **130 naturally fluoridated water systems**. These systems have natural fluoride levels ranging from **0.61 to 3.81 mg/L**.

260 water systems adjust fluoride level or purchase water from a system that does.

The population served by fluoridated water systems is over **4.2 million people** or **76.8%** of the total Missouri population.

Of the 76.8% who have fluoridated water, only **66.4%** (3.6 million people) have **optimally fluoridated water**.



Changes in Missouri's Fluoridation Status

Voted to begin fluoridation

Camden Co PWSD 4 – Horseshoe Bend
August 2023

Voted to continue fluoridation

Lake Winnebago	Rolla
November 2023	May 2025

Voted to stop fluoridation

Branson	Sarcoxie	Hannibal
November 2023	November 2024	June 2025

Initiated 90-day notification process

Crane	Cabool
June 2025	July 2025



Water Fluoridation Training

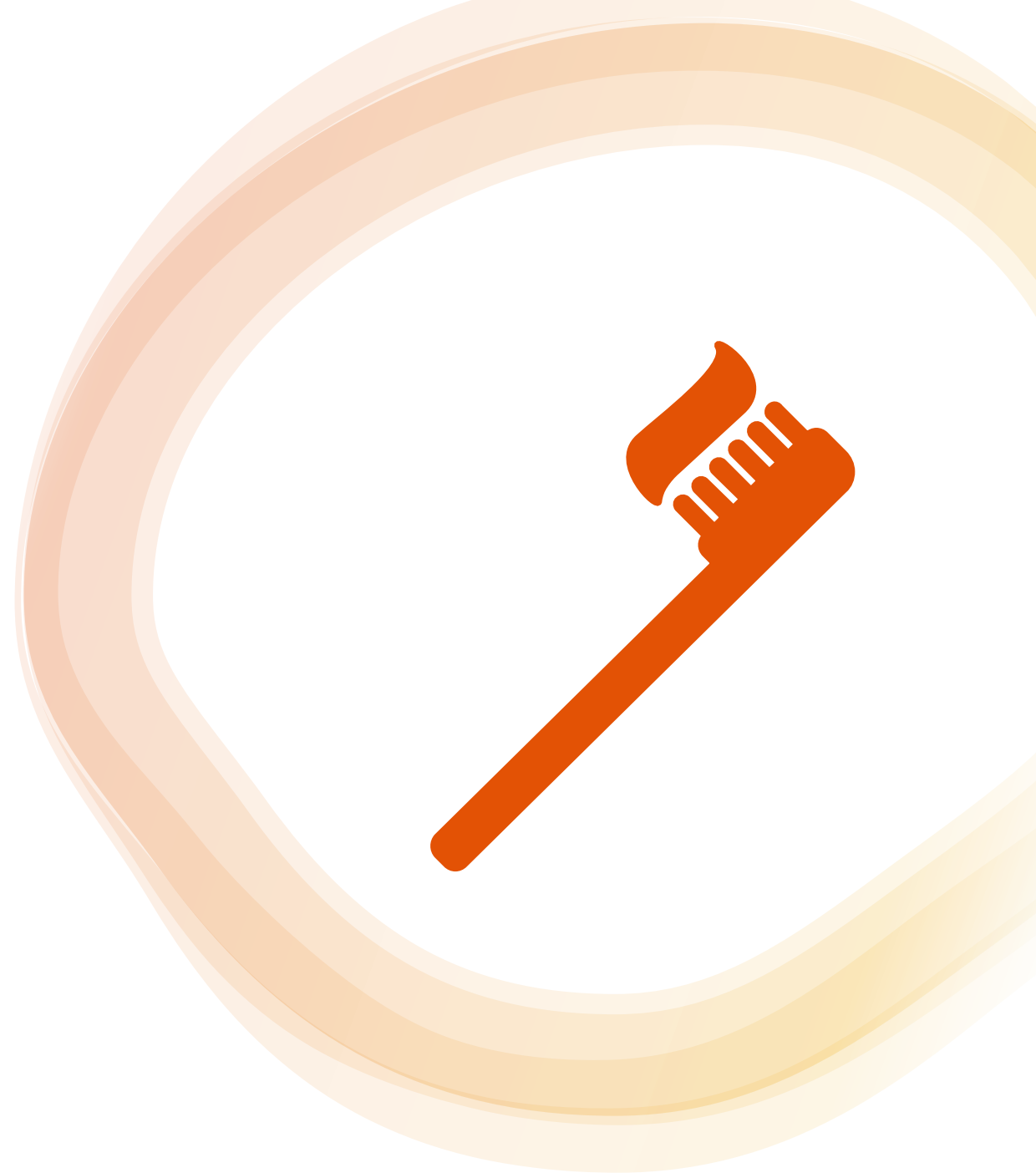
- Background information on water fluoridation.
- Water treatment processes.
- Discuss state and federal statutes and regulations.
- 7:30 – 12:30 with water plant tour

- **August 22 – Kansas City**
- **August 29 – Springfield**
- **September 5 – Cape Girardeau**
- **October 10 – Online**

https://redcap.link/ODH_CWF_training_2025

For Optimal Oral Health

- Two dental visits, cleanings preventive services each year.
- Brush your teeth 2x per day and floss 1x per day.
- Eat a well-balanced, low-sugar diet.
- Drink fluoridated water.





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573.751.5874