

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

FLUORIDE ACTION NETWORK 2017



The Fluoride Action Network (FAN) seeks to broaden awareness about the toxicity of fluoride compounds among citizens, scientists, and policymakers alike.

Is Fluoridation an Environmental Racism Issue? Most likely, yes. Here's why...



Current data shows that water fluoridation disproportionately harms low-income and minority communities. In response to this data, a growing number of civil rights advocates have begun calling for a moratorium on fluoridation programs. This includes L.U.L.A.C. (the largest Hispanic civil rights organization), Andrew Young (the former Mayor of Atlanta and Ambassador to the United Nations), and Reverend Bernice King (the daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King). Water fluoridation has, in

short, become an issue of environmental justice.

What Is Environmental Racism?

Environmental racism is the disproportionate impact of environmental hazards on people of color. Environmental justice is the movement's response to environmental racism. Environmental racism refers to the institutional rules, regulations, policies or government and/or corporate decisions that result in communities of color being disproportionately exposed to

environmental hazards such as toxic chemicals. Largely a result of unintended consequences, environmental racism negatively affects the health and environment of low income and/or communities of color at a disparate rate than affluent communities.

What's Being Done?

A growing chorus of leaders in communities of color are calling for federal and state hearings and investigations into new revelations about risks from drinking fluoridated water.

Is Water Fluoridation An Environmental Racism Issue?

Reason #1: Urban Water

Urban drinking water is more likely to be fluoridated than suburban and rural water systems, affecting blacks and Hispanics more than whites.

Reason #2: Lead Uptake

Fluoridation chemicals can cause increased absorption of lead, and this lead-absorbing effect is more pronounced in black & Hispanic populations (which are already over-exposed to lead). Increased lead exposure is connected to increases in learning disorders.

Reason #3: Fluorosis

Studies have found that in fluoridated communities, Mexican-American and African-American children are at greater risk for dental fluorosis (damaged tooth enamel caused by over-exposure to fluoride).

Reason #4: Diabetes & Kidneys

Scientists have identified kidney patients and diabetics as being especially susceptible to harm from ingested fluorides. Blacks suffer disproportionate amounts of kidney disease and diabetes in America.

Reason #5: Infant Formula

The American Dental Association and the CDC have recommended that parents avoid using fluoridated water when mixing infant formula for their babies.

Reason #6: Preterm Births

A potential link between water fluoridation and preterm births has been shown to be most prominent among the poor and people of color.

**IS THERE FLUORIDE
COMING OUT OF
YOUR TAP?
HELP US HELP YOU
GET IT OUT**

FLUORIDEALERT.ORG

Civil Rights Leaders Call For An End To Water Fluoridation



*“Fluoridation won’t fix the dental problems facing low-income children.”
Clifford Walker, Chair of the Portland NAACP’s Veteran’s Committee.*

Rethinking Water Fluoridation

Water fluoridation is routinely proposed by public health officials as an effective way of preventing the high rates of tooth decay now found in low-income populations throughout the United States. But current data show that there are at least three problems with this position:

First, most of the oral health crises occurring in the U.S. right now are taking place in low-income urban areas that have been fluoridated for decades. Yet this has not prevented low-income neighborhoods in these areas from suffering what numerous state and local health officials describe as an oral health crisis. It is unclear, therefore, how fluoridation can be expected to prevent oral health crises when it has failed to prevent such crises in areas that have been fluoridated for 30 to 60 years.

Second, published studies have repeatedly found that fluoridation does not prevent the type of tooth decay (baby bottle tooth decay) that is the hallmark of the current oral health crises.

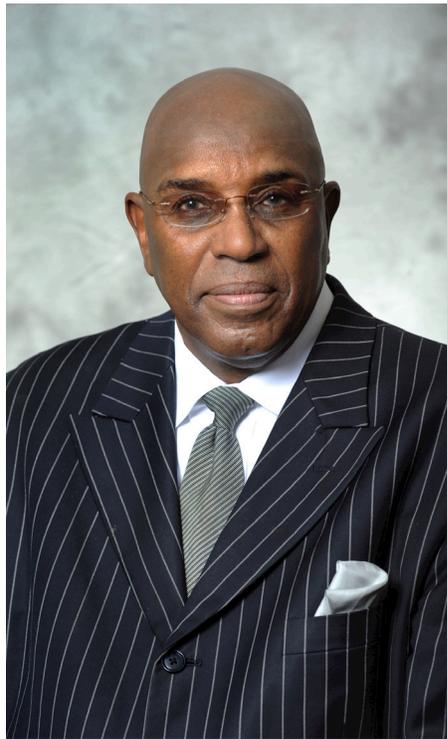
Third, evidence of disproportionate harm to communities of color turns on its head the notion that fluoridation is a benefit to the economically disadvantaged.

Fluoridation Is Not Dental Care

It has become obvious that the addition of cheap industrial chemicals to the water supply has never been, and will never be, an effective form of dental care. If we really care about the oral health of our children we should instead advocate for better oral hygiene and nutrition education, free toothbrush/toothpaste programs, reduced sugar intake, and affordable dental care for economically disadvantaged communities.

Low-Income Communities At Heightened Risk of Fluoride Toxicity

Low-income communities are more susceptible to fluoride’s toxicity for several reasons. Health conditions that render people more vulnerable to fluoride exposure (e.g., kidney disease and diabetes) are more prevalent among low-income populations. Nutrient deficiencies are also more prevalent in low-income communities, as voluminous research spanning back to the 1930s clearly shows that populations with nutrient deficiencies suffer greater harm from fluoride exposure. As but one example, a 1952 study in the Journal of the American Dental Association warned: “The data from this and other investigations suggest that malnourished infants and children, especially if deficient in calcium intake, may suffer from the effects of water containing fluorine while healthy children would remain unaffected...Thus low levels of fluoride ingestion which are generally considered to be safe for the general population may not be safe for malnourished infants and children. Therefore, the nutritional status must be carefully assessed and guarded in areas with endemic fluorosis. Nutritional studies should be included in any comprehensive program of fluoridation of water with special attention to chronically ailing infants and children.”



“First and foremost, water fluoridation takes away people’s choice...

Second, fluoridation disproportionately harms members of the black community...

Third, we cannot control the dose of fluoride people ingest when we put fluoride in drinking water

Reverend Dr. Gerald Durley

Communities of Color Disproportionately Harmed

In 2005, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) published the results of a national survey of dental fluorosis conducted between 1999 and 2002 that show that African-American and Mexican-American children suffer significantly higher rates of dental fluorosis compared to white children. Dental fluorosis is a defect of teeth enamel caused by too much fluoride exposure, which can cause disfiguring stains and pitting on the teeth. Not only

do African-American and Mexican-American children suffer higher rates of fluorosis, they suffer more severe forms of the condition. The CDC’s national survey found that the rate of the most disfiguring form of fluorosis is nearly twice as high in the black community as the white community.

The CDC’s survey is not the first study to find that black children suffer higher rates of dental fluorosis. The nation’s first pilot study of water fluoridation in 1945 in Grand Rapids, MI, reported that black children suffered dental fluorosis at twice the rate of white children.



“Water fluoridation needs to end.”
Rev. Bernice A. King, a pastor, attorney, and daughter of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Fluoride Risks Factors in the Black Community

There are several possible explanations for why the black community may be disproportionately impacted by fluoride exposures. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the increased risk could be the result of either “biologic susceptibility or greater fluoride intake.” (CDC 2005). Risk factors for fluoride toxicity in the black community include: poor nutrition,

high rates of infant formula use; reduced milk consumption due to a high prevalence of lactose intolerance; depressed nutrient intake (including calcium and anti-oxidants) vis-a-vis other racial groups; high levels of lead exposure; and higher rates of health conditions (e.g., kidney disease and diabetes) that render the body more vulnerable to fluoride intake.

Black and Hispanic Leaders Call to Action

Hispanic leaders speak out

The League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) is the oldest Hispanic civil rights organization in the United States. In September 2011, LULAC passed a resolution opposing fluoridation which states that: 1) Current science shows that fluoridation chemicals pose increased risk to sensitive subpopulations, including infants, the elderly, diabetics, kidney patients, and people with poor nutritional status. 2) Minority communities are more highly impacted by fluorides as they historically experience more diabetes and kidney disease. 3) Minorities are disproportionately harmed by fluorides as documented by increased rates of dental fluorosis.

WATER FLUORIDATION IS A CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUE

Black leaders speak out

Andrew Young, former Atlanta mayor and U.N. Ambassador during the Clinton administration, has called for an end to water fluoridation. "My father was a dentist. I formerly was a strong believer in the benefits of water fluoridation for preventing cavities. But many things that we began to do 50 or more years ago we now no longer do, because we have learned further information that changes our practices and policies. So it is with fluoridation."

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To find out more, visit:

fluoridealert.org

Special thanks to Dan Stockin of the Lillie Center for Energy & Health Studies and Mike Ewall of the Energy Justice Network for their contributions to this issue.



HENRY RODRIGUEZ
LULAC'S TEXAS CHAIRMAN

"THE HISPANIC COMMUNITY IS NO LONGER GOING TO BE SILENT ON THIS ISSUE...(FLUORIDATION) IS ABOUT FORCING US TO BE MEDICATED THROUGH OUR DRINKING WATER WITHOUT OUR CONSENT OR FULL DISCLOSURE OF THE RISKS."



DR. ALVEDA KING
CIVIL RIGHTS LEADER

"THE FLUORIDE GATE SCANDAL CONTINUES TO UNRAVEL. ALL WATER FLUORIDATION LEGISLATION SHOULD BE REPEALED IN ALL STATES THAT ENACT FLUORIDATION."

"THIS IS A CIVIL RIGHTS ISSUE. NO ONE SHOULD BE SUBJECTED TO DRINKING FLUORIDE IN THEIR WATER..."



ANDREW YOUNG
FORMER U.N. AMBASSADOR

"I AM MOST DEEPLY CONCERNED FOR POOR FAMILIES WHO HAVE BABIES: IF THEY CANNOT AFFORD UNFLUORIDATED WATER FOR THEIR BABIES MILK FORMULA, DO THEIR BABIES NOT COUNT? OF COURSE THEY DO. THIS IS AN ISSUE OF FAIRNESS, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND COMPASSION. WE MUST FIND BETTER WAYS TO PREVENT CAVITIES, SUCH AS HELPING THOSE MOST AT RISK FOR CAVITIES OBTAIN ACCESS TO THE SERVICES OF A DENTIST."