

Introduced by: Mayor Cleworth
Date: May 23, 2011

ORDINANCE NO. 5849, As Amended

**AN ORDINANCE AMENDING FGC 82-1 TO PROHIBIT THE
ADDITION OF FLUORIDE TO COMMUNITY WATER SYSTEMS**

WHEREAS, City Code has required the addition of fluoride to the community water system since 1959; and

WHEREAS, in response to questions about the benefits and risks of fluoride, the City Council created the Fairbanks Fluoride Task Force to study the issue and make recommendations; and

WHEREAS, the members of the Fluoride Task Force had advanced degrees and knowledge in the fields of chemistry, geochemistry, microbiology, medicine and dentistry; and

WHEREAS, after an exhaustive inquiry and over a year of public hearings, research and analysis, the Task Force issued a report with recommendations as follows:

The Fairbanks Fluoride Task Force makes a set of four recommendations. We anticipate that the community's focus will be on Recommendation #1, but as a committee we feel strongly that Recommendations 2, 3, and 4 should be implemented along with Recommendation #1 as part of a cohesive plan to address dental health issues in our community.

1. Primarily because (1) the ground water used for Fairbanks public water contains an average of 0.3 ppm fluoride, and (2) higher concentrations of fluoride put non-nursing infants at risk, the task force recommends that supplemental fluoridation of the Fairbanks public water supply be terminated. The task force further recommends that the Fairbanks community be informed of possible dental health implications from not fluoridating the water.

Rationale: Not fluoridating Fairbanks water will reduce the fluoride content from 0.7 ppm to 0.3 ppm, which is the fluoride concentration of the raw water used by Golden Heart Utilities (GHU). This will reduce, but not eliminate, the risk of significant incidence and severity of fluorosis, especially fluorosis associated with the use of GHU water to prepare infant formula. Doing so will also address ethical concerns raised during the task force's public testimony. However, the effect of this reduction in fluoride concentration on the caries rate in the Fairbanks community, while most likely small, is unknown and unpredictable. Those who depend on 0.7 ppm fluoride in tap water for their dental health need to be informed of the possible adverse consequences to their dental health caused by reducing the fluoride content of Fairbanks tap water from 0.7 ppm to 0.3 ppm and of the measures that can be taken to address these possible adverse consequences.

The task force has made this recommendation to terminate fluoridation of GHU water with full knowledge of and respect for the positions of the American Dental Association (ADA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC; part of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services), the World Health Organization, and the Alaska Department of Public Health in support of fluoridation of public water supplies. While the task force members agree that water fluoridation may be an important element of an effective dental health program in many communities, the majority of members are not convinced that it is necessary in Fairbanks because of the fluoride content of the city's ground water and the alternate sources of fluoride available in the community.

Five task force members, with various degrees of conviction, support this recommendation, while one member (Dr. Taylor) supports continuing fluoridation at 0.7 ppm.

2. The Fairbanks City Council's decision-making process on fluoridation should involve representatives of the Fairbanks North Star Borough government.

Rationale: At least 25% of area residents who receive GHU water reside outside the city limits.

3. Local dentists and physicians should be encouraged to provide their patients with up-to-date information on the benefits and risks associated with fluoride.

Rationale: If nothing else, the recent notice that the secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has proposed a new recommendation on fluoridation of public water supplies indicates that the citizenry should be informed about the state of contemporary research findings and analysis related to the role of fluoride in dental health. All of the members of the task force went into this project with incomplete and in some cases incorrect information about the issue. We suspect that we are not unique in that respect.

4. The Fairbanks City Council should encourage the local school system to review and modify, as appropriate, its approach to promoting good dental health practices.

Rationale: The local schools have an excellent opportunity to help all families in the community to learn about and to implement good dental health practices, which can include optional opportunities at school for topical fluoride treatment (in the form of rinses and tooth brushing, for example) as well as techniques for minimizing unnecessary and/or unwanted exposure to fluoride.

WHEREAS, the Fairbanks North Star Borough Assembly has been notified of the Task Force report.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF FAIRBANKS, ALASKA, as follows:

Section 1. Fairbanks General Code Sections 82-1 is amended as follows (new text in **underlined bold font**, deleted text in ~~strikeout font~~):

Sec. 82-1. City Community water systems fluoridated.

~~A source of fluoride ion, approved by the state department of health, shall be added to the water supply of the city under the rules and regulations of the state department of health, such addition to be administered by Golden Heart Utilities, Inc. in a manner approved by the environmental coordinator of the city~~

- a. **Water utilities that own or operate community water distribution systems in the City shall not add fluoride, in any form, to the water system.**
- b. **The operators of community water distribution systems within the City of Fairbanks shall provide a copy of the annual water quality report, called the Consumer Confidence Report, to the City. The report shall be filed with the City Clerk and available for public inspection.**

Section 2. A display advertisement shall be published providing information about the Fluoride Task Force recommendations, including information about where a full copy of the report can be obtained. In addition, information shall be sent to the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

Section 3. The City recognizes that the Golden Heart Utilities, the operator of the community water system providing water in the City, will need regulatory approval from the State of Alaska for the water treatment process changes before discontinuing fluoridation. Therefore, while GHU is encouraged to implement the change as soon as possible, this ordinance shall be effective the 1st day of July 2011.

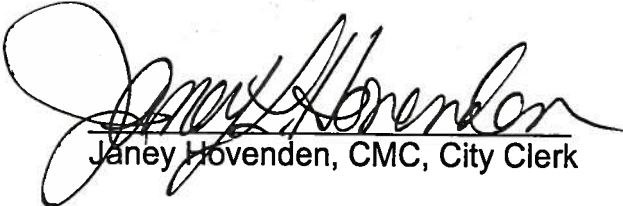


Jerry Cleworth, Mayor


AYES: Roberts, Matherly, Gatewood, Eberhart, Stiver
NAYS: Bratcher
ABSTAIN:
ABSENT:
ADOPTION: June 6, 2011

ATTEST:

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



Janey Hovenden, CMC, City Clerk



Paul Ewers, City Attorney