



SB 311 - Fluoridation of Water in Washoe County
Assembly Committee on Health and Human Services
May 27, 2009

The Experience in Clark County

- Clark County water has been fluoridated since March 2000.
- The cost of providing community water fluoridation in Clark County was approximately \$0.19 per person in FY 2006. The estimated savings in averted dental disease was nearly \$13 million.
- Each year for the past 7 years, scores for DMFT (Decayed, Missing and Filled Permanent Teeth) were significantly lower for adolescents in Clark County than in areas with no fluoridation.
- 72% of Nevada's total population receives fluoridated water due to community water fluoridation in Clark County.

The Need in Washoe County

- The number of Medicaid children visiting a dentist that required one or more fillings was **39 % higher** in Washoe County than Clark County (unpublished Medicaid data FY 2006).
- Head Start children in Washoe County experienced **15 % more** tooth decay than Head Start children in Clark County (64% vs. 49%) in 2007.

The Bill

- SB 311 requires the Health Department to adopt regulations requiring the fluoridation of water in Washoe County delivered by Truckee Meadows Water Authority (TMWA), the only public water system that serves 100,000 or more people.
- TMWA is required to fluoridate the water at its treatment facilities no later than July 1, 2010. The cost is estimated by TMWA to be 54 cents per connection per month.
- In November 2010, Washoe County voters will be asked an advisory question whether to cease the fluoridation of water in their county.
- SB 311 does not impact the current requirement for fluoridation in Clark County.

The Benefit

- Fluoridation benefits everyone in the community, regardless of socioeconomic status which provides protection against tooth decay in populations with limited access to prevention services.
- The 2006 Burden of Oral Disease in Nevada, published by the Nevada Health Division, reported that a **significantly higher proportion of minority children have untreated decay in comparison to white non-Hispanic children** (78% vs. 61%). Also, a **significantly higher proportion of minority children have untreated decay** (55% vs. 28%) and a significantly lower proportion of dental sealants (33% vs. 51%)
- According to the 2006 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Nevada State Health Division, **39% of Black/African Americans and 36 % of Hispanics have lost 1-5 teeth due to tooth decay or gum disease compared to only 27 % of whites.**