Water Fluoridation Survey

Moora

September 2011

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Environmental Health Directorate, Public Health Division
Department of Health, WA
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Acknowledgements:

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Disclaimer:

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Table of Contents

List of Figures ........................................................................................................ 1
Executive Summary ............................................................................................... 3
1. Introduction ....................................................................................................... 5
2. Methodology ...................................................................................................... 6
   2.1 Sample selection .......................................................................................... 6
   2.2 Data Collection ........................................................................................... 6
   2.3 Data analysis ............................................................................................... 7
   2.4 Response rate ............................................................................................. 7
   2.5 Weighting the data ..................................................................................... 8
3. Results ............................................................................................................... 9
   3.1 Demographics ............................................................................................. 9
   3.2 Fluoride in the public water supply ............................................................ 11
   3.3 Attitude towards fluoridation ..................................................................... 13
   3.4 Perceptions of safety and efficacy of fluoridation ...................................... 16
   3.5 Drinking water source ................................................................................ 22
   3.6 Information received on fluoridation ........................................................ 25

Appendix A: Approach letter ............................................................................... 27
Appendix B: Water Fluoridation Survey Questionnaire ....................................... 29
Appendix C: Result tables .................................................................................... 33
Appendix D: Respondents’ comments ................................................................ 38
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List of Figures

Figure 1 Percentage of valid respondents connected to the public drinking water supply, Moora ............................................................ 11

Figure 2 Percentage of valid respondents knowing whether fluoride has or has not been added to the public drinking water supply, Moora ................................................... 12

Figure 3 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply, Moora ................................................................. 13

Figure 4 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation by knowledge of current fluoridation status of the water supply, Moora ................................................................. 14

Figure 5 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement with the addition of fluoride into the public drinking water supply, by age group, Moora .................................................. 15

Figure 6 Percentage of valid respondents who agreed that the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply is safe, Moora ...................................................................... 16

Figure 7 Percentage of valid respondents and their perceived safety of the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies and agreement to public water supply fluoridation, Moora .................................................................................. 17

Figure 8 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that fluoride in the public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, Moora .......................................................... 18

Figure 9 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, by age group, Moora .......................................................... 19

Figure 10 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, Moora ................................................ 20

Figure 11 Percentage of valid respondents (who agreed to fluoridation) and their perception on the benefits of the addition of fluoride in public drinking water supplies, Moora .......................................................................................... 21

Figure 12 Percentage of valid respondents and their most commonly used source of drinking water, Moora ........................................................................................................ 22

Figure 13 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, by water source, Moora .......................................................................................... 23

Figure 14 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies, by water source, Moora .................................................................................. 24

Figure 15 Percentage of respondents and their source of information about adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply, Moora .................................................................................. 25
Executive Summary

The Water Unit at the Environmental Health Directorate of the Department of Health WA was requested by the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee to organise a postal survey of residents of the community of Moora. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain the level of awareness and support within the community for the addition of fluoride to the local public drinking water supply.

The postal survey took place in August 2011.

The major findings of the survey were:

- Just over half (51%) of the respondents agreed to the addition of fluoride in public drinking water supplies. The proportion who agreed to the addition of fluoride was higher than those who did not agree to the addition of fluoride (23%) and those who were unsure (26%).

- The majority agreed with the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies by age groups, except for the 18-34 years age group, in which case the majority were unsure. The proportion that did not agree was uniformly lower.

- Overall, 48% of respondents agreed that the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply is safe, with 19% not agreeing and 33% unsure.

- Overall, 49% of respondents agreed that fluoride in the public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay. This was larger than the 16% who did not agree and the 30% who were unsure (5% unstated).

- When comparisons were made between age groups, the majority of respondents in each age group agreed that adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply can assist in preventing tooth decay, except for the 18-34 years age group, in which case the majority were unsure. The proportion that did not agree was uniformly lower.
• Respondents who were in favour of adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply stated the benefit was seen to be for both adults and children.

• Overall, 74% of respondents stated that they usually consumed tap water from the public drinking water supply and 21% stated that they use rain water as their most common drinking water source, but this did not appear to affect their overall views on adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply or its benefits.

The results from the Water Fluoridation Survey indicate that around half of the respondents from Moora were in favour of the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply and agree that its addition can assist in the prevention of tooth decay. This is greater than the proportion of the respondents who are not in favour of it, with most of the remainder being unsure rather than not agreeing to the proposition.
1. Introduction

This report has been prepared by the Water Unit, Environmental Health Directorate, Department of Health WA for the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee\(^1\).

The Water Unit at the Environmental Health Directorate was requested by the Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Advisory Committee to organise a postal survey of residents of the community of Moora to ascertain the level of awareness and support within the community for the addition of fluoride to the local public drinking water supply.

This report documents the results of the Water Fluoridation Survey.

The Water Fluoridation Survey had two main objectives:

- To ascertain the level of awareness in the community on fluoride addition to the public water supply.
- To measure local support for the addition of fluoride in the Moora public drinking water supply.

Moora is a community of approximately 1840 people\(^2\), located 180 km north of Perth, Western Australia. Drinking water is supplied to Moora by Water Corporation. This supply is presently not fluoridated\(^3\).

Information about drinking water supplied by Water Corporation can be found at:


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\(^3\) Water fluoridation is the adjustment of the amount of fluoride in drinking water to a level that helps protect teeth against decay. [source: [www.health.vic.gov.au/environment/fluoridation/community_info.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/environment/fluoridation/community_info.htm)]
2. Methodology

2.1 Sample selection

Survey forms were based on the questions used previously for a similar survey of the greater Bunbury area\(^4\). This was designed to facilitate comparison of the results. The Moora survey was run at the same time as a similar survey of the Jurien Bay community.

The survey questions were chosen based on previously published literature on attitudes towards the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies and were worded to be succinct, centred on the research and ethically appropriate.

The survey sought some basic demographic and age breakdown information about the respondent’s household but did not seek identifiable information about individuals. The approach letter and survey forms are set out in Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.

2.2 Data Collection

The postal survey was sent out in August 2011 to residential properties in Moora that have a registered Water Corporation service. The addresses were based on a (deidentified) database of addresses provided by Water Corporation. The survey form was addressed “Dear Householder” and was accompanied by a reply paid envelope for return at no cost to the respondent. A code was attached to the unmarked survey response sheets to ensure that duplicates were not submitted.

Whilst the survey form requested surveys to be returned by 29 August 2011, all surveys returned by 15 September 2011 were included in the data analysis, to ensure that as many survey results as possible were considered. No survey forms were received after 15 September 2011.

The survey was conducted in accordance with all applicable record keeping and privacy provisions for the Western Australian public sector.

### 2.3 Data analysis

For analysis that involved cross tabulation of multiple factors or areas of interest, only data that has a response was included. All analysis presented in this report was completed using de-identified data.

Survey responses that did not answer questions 1, 2 and 3, or were completely blank, were not considered as valid responses and were not included in the analysis.

### 2.4 Response rate

A total of 743 survey forms were sent out to Moora households. A total of 158 valid survey responses were returned, giving a response rate of 21.3%. Only one form was returned unopened (i.e. marked “Return To Sender”), due to an error in the postal address.

Based on peer-reviewed literature, the desirable response rate for a mail out survey, regardless of its subject matter, is 60%\(^5\). However this is not usually reached, with most response rates in mail out surveys generally ranging from 30% to 70%, with 45% response rates being the average in surveys reported in published literature. The lower the response rate, the more important is the issue of whether or how well the respondents represented the views of the community of interest overall.

Nevertheless, peer reviewed literature on survey methodology indicates that a person's decision about whether to participate in a survey or not is in part determined by how important the topic of the survey is to them, potentially leading to self-selection bias.\(^6\)

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\(^5\) References:


In essence, this means that community members with a view on the subject matter of a survey (in this case, fluoridation of public drinking water supplies) are more likely to respond than those with little interest in the topic.

2.5 Weighting the data

The survey results have not been statistically weighted according to the estimated resident population for Moora. The results and findings were solely based on the data from the responses of the returned surveys and need to be viewed in that light and the information in section 2.4 above.
3. Results

Results are presented for each question asked in the survey. Results that are presented in graphic form are also shown in table format in Appendix C of this report.

3.1 Demographics

The socio-demographic characteristics of the 158 valid responses are shown in Table 1. On balance, the survey respondents were predominantly female (58% female, 41% male, 1% unstated), relative to the gender ratios of the Moora community (approx. 51% female, 49% male), and were predominantly over 45 years of age (78%), with 21% between 18 and 44 years of age and 1% unstated age.

Table 1 Demographic and socio-demographic characteristics of valid respondents, Moora

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age groups</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
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<td>10.1%</td>
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<td>45-54</td>
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<td>55.7%</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Who they live with</th>
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<tr>
<td>Partner only</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partner and children</td>
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<td>25.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children only</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friends or relatives</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
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<td>21-30</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>41+</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>11-20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
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<td>4.4%</td>
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<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Labourer</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tradesperson</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical or service worker</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pensioner</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.2 Fluoride in the public water supply

Respondents were asked if their premises were currently connected to the public drinking water supply.

Figure 1 shows that 97% of all valid respondents stated that they were connected to the Moora public drinking water supply, with 1% each answering no, unsure or unstated. The data is in Table 2 (in Appendix C).

Figure 1 Percentage of valid respondents connected to the public drinking water supply, Moora
Respondents were also asked if they knew whether their drinking water supply currently had fluoride added to it.

Figure 2 illustrated that the majority of the respondents did not know if fluoride was currently added to their drinking water supply or not (61%). One-sixth (17%) of valid respondents were sure that fluoride was not currently added and just over one-fifth (22%) were sure that the public water supply was currently fluoridated. The data is in Table 3 (in Appendix C). NB The Moora drinking water supply is presently not fluoridated.

Figure 2 Percentage of valid respondents knowing whether fluoride has or has not been added to the public drinking water supply, Moora
3.3 Attitude towards fluoridation

The survey asked about attitudes towards the addition of fluoride to the Moora public drinking water supply and the perceived safety and efficacy of fluoridation.

Overall, 51% of valid respondents agreed to adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply. Figure 3 illustrates that the proportion in agreement to the addition of fluoride was higher than those who did not agree to the addition of fluoride (23%) and those who were unsure (26%). The data is in Table 4 (in Appendix C).

Figure 3 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply, Moora
Regardless of whether respondents were sure whether the public drinking water supply was currently fluoridated, the majority of respondents agreed with fluoride being added to the public drinking water supply.

The yellow columns in Figure 4 show that 48% of valid respondents who were unsure if the public drinking water supply was fluoridated or not were in favour of its addition, 60% were in favour if they thought the water supply was already fluoridated and 48% were in favour of fluoridation if they thought the water supply was not currently fluoridated.

In all cases, the proportion in favour was greater than the proportion who were not (the blue columns) or who were unsure (the maroon columns). The proportions of those who were not sure of the current status of the public drinking water supply were more equally split between yes (48%) and unsure (36%). Similarly, the proportions of those who were sure the water was not currently fluoridated were more equally split between yes (48%) and no (37%). The data is in Table 5 (in Appendix C).

Figure 4 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation by knowledge of current fluoridation status of the water supply, Moora
To determine if age was a significant factor in agreeing (or otherwise) with the addition of fluoride in the Moora public drinking water supply, comparison was made between four age groups. The majority of valid respondents agreed with the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies by age groups, except for the 18-34 years group, in which case the majority were unsure.

The yellow columns in Figure 5 show that 35% of valid respondents aged 18 – 34 years were in agreement along with 63% of valid respondents aged 35-44 years, 66% of valid respondents aged 45-54 years and 44% of valid respondents 55 years and over.

Agreement with the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply was higher than not agreeing (blue columns) or being unsure (maroon columns) for all age groups except for the 18-34 age group where 18% did not agree and 47% were unsure.

The proportion agreeing to the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply in the 35-44 and 45-54 years age group was higher. The data is in Table 6 (in Appendix C).

Figure 5 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement with the addition of fluoride into the public drinking water supply, by age group, Moora
3.4 Perceptions of safety and efficacy of fluoridation

Figure 6 illustrates the breakdown of responses in relation to the safety of the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies.

Overall, 48% of valid respondents agreed that the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply is safe. Figure 6 illustrates the breakdown of responses in relation to the safety of the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies. This was larger than the 19% who did not agree that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies was safe and the 33% who were unsure. The data is in Table 7 (in Appendix C).

**Figure 6** Percentage of valid respondents who agreed that the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply is safe, Moora
Respondents’ perception of safety around the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies was linked to their agreement with adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply.

Figure 7 illustrates that 97% of respondents who agreed with the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies agreed it was safe, while those who did not agree to the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies also did not agree that it was safe to add fluoride to the public drinking water supply (93%). Of those who neither agreed nor disagreed with the addition of fluoride, the majority was unsure whether it was safe (77%).

The data is in Table 8 (in Appendix C).
Respondents were asked if they agreed that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay (efficacy of fluoridation).

Figure 8 shows that 49% of valid respondents agreed that fluoride in the public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay. This was larger than the 16% who did not agree that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay and the 30% who were unsure (with 5% not stating a response to this question).

The data is in Table 9 (in Appendix C).

A number of respondents also provided written comments in the returned survey forms. These comments are set out in Appendix D, including two survey forms where the comments were not able to be codified.
When comparisons were made between age groups the majority of valid respondents in each age group agreed that adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply can assist in preventing tooth decay. Figure 9 illustrates that 35% of respondents aged 18 – 34 years, 56% of respondents aged 35 – 44 years, 68% of respondents aged 45 – 54 years and 48% of respondents aged 55 years and over agreed that fluoride in the public drinking water could assist in the prevention of tooth decay (yellow columns in Figure 9).

Considerably more respondents in the 18-34 age group were unsure (53%), as represented by the maroon columns. In all age groups the proportion who did not agree that adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply can assist in preventing tooth decay was uniformly lower (12% of respondents aged 18 – 34 years, 19% of respondents aged 35 – 44 years, 9% of respondents aged 45 – 54 years and 21% of respondents aged 55 years and over), as represented by the blue columns in Figure 9. These results were very similar to the results shown in Figure 5. The data is in Table 10 (in Appendix C).

Figure 9 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, by age group, Moora
The views of respondents on whether adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply can help prevent tooth decay was significantly correlated with their agreement (or otherwise) to adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply.

Figure 10 illustrates that 87% of valid respondents who agreed to adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply agreed that doing so can help prevent tooth decay, with 9% of this group unsure and only 4% of this group not agreeing.

On the other hand, 92% of valid respondents who did not agree to adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply did not agree that doing so can help prevent tooth decay, with only 4% of this group agreeing and 4% unsure. Most (66%) of the respondents who were unsure about adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply were also unsure whether doing so can help prevent tooth decay. The data is in Table 11 (in Appendix C).

Figure 10 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, Moora
Those respondents who agreed that fluoride could assist in the prevention of tooth decay were asked if they would be in favour of adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply to assist with tooth decay and what groups in the community they felt would benefit.

Figure 11 illustrates that, for respondents who were in favour of fluoridation, the benefit was overwhelmingly seen to be for both adults and children. The data is in Table 12 (in Appendix C).

![Figure 11 Percentage of valid respondents (who agreed to fluoridation) and their perception on the benefits of the addition of fluoride in public drinking water supplies, Moora](image-url)
3.5 Drinking water source

While almost all households in the survey were connected to the Moora public drinking water supply, it was also of interest to determine what proportion of respondents actually consumes water from this supply.

Figure 11 illustrates that tap water is the most common type of water consumed. Overall, 74% of valid respondents stated that they usually consumed tap water from the public drinking water supply, with 21% stating that they use rain water as their most common drinking water source.

The data is in Table 13 (in Appendix C).

Figure 12 Percentage of valid respondents and their most commonly used source of drinking water, Moora
Along with agreement to the addition of fluoride there was also interest in determining if the type of water consumed had an impact on the respondent’s perception of the benefits (or otherwise) of adding fluoride to public drinking water supplies in assisting to prevent tooth decay.

Figure 13 illustrates that, for those who stated that they usually drink water from the public drinking water supply, 53% agree that the addition of fluoride to this type of water supply can assist in preventing tooth decay, with most of the remainder (34%) unsure.

For those who stated that they usually drink other water types, 47% agreed that the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water could assist in preventing tooth decay, with the remainder being reasonably evenly split between those who did not agree (28%) and those who were unsure (25%). The data is in Table 14. Note that the column heights in Figure 13 need to be viewed in light of the breakdown by water source in Figure 12.

Figure 13 Percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, by water source, Moora
Figure 14 illustrates that the majority of respondents agreed to the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies regardless of what was their most commonly used source of drinking water. The yellow columns show that 53% of those who stated that they usually drink water from the public drinking water supply and 47% of those who stated that they usually drink rain water agreed to the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies.

The seven respondents in the “bottled water” category were more evenly split and the sole respondent in the “other” category did not agree to the proposition. The data is in Table 15 (in Appendix C). Note that the column heights in Figure 14 need to be viewed in light of the breakdown by water source in Figure 12, indicating that tap water from the public drinking water supply was the predominant source.
### 3.6 Information received on fluoridation

Respondents were asked where they had received information about the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies.

Figure 15 illustrates the main sources of information for those respondents who answered this question. Multiple responses were possible for this question. The information sources were reasonably equally split, with newspapers and television being the most important sources, although “No information” was also a common response to this question.

The data is in Table 16 (in Appendix C).

**Figure 15 Percentage of respondents and their source of information about adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply, Moora**
Appendix A: Approach letter

Dear Householder

Water Fluoridation Survey

The Department of Health is inviting residents of Jurien Bay and Moora to take part in a survey on attitudes towards the addition of fluoride to public drinking water.

The survey will take no more than a few minutes to complete. All information collected will be strictly confidential. The answers from all people who respond will be gathered together and no individual answers will be published or passed on. While you do not have to participate I hope that you do.

The results of the survey will be used to help us obtain a community view on the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies in Jurien Bay and Moora.

The survey needs to be completed by an adult over the age of 18 years and returned in the enclosed reply paid envelope by the 29 August 2011.

If you have any queries about the survey, please call Richard Theobald on 9388 4967.

I would like to thank you in advance for your support and for participating in this important initiative.

Yours sincerely

Jim Dodds
DIRECTOR
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DIRECTORATE

Encs
Appendix B: Water Fluoridation Survey Questionnaire

Water Fluoridation Survey 2011

How to complete this form:
Answer questions by ticking only the single most appropriate option unless otherwise specified.
Please provide additional comments in the space provided.

Q1) Is your residence connected to the public water supply?

☐ No (Go to Q3)
☐ Yes (Go to Q2)
☐ Unsure (Go to Q2)

Q2) Do you know whether fluoride has or has not been added to your public water supply?

☐ No, I don't know if fluoride has been added to the public water supply
☐ Yes, I am sure the public water supply has had fluoride added
☐ Yes, I am sure the public water supply has not had fluoride added

Q3) Do you agree with the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

Q4) Do you believe that the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply is safe?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure
Q5) Do you believe that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay?

- No (enter comment Q5a) (Go to Q7)
- Yes (enter comment Q5a) (Go to Q6)
- Unsure (Go to Q6)

Q5a) Comment ____________________________ [specify]

Q6) Would you be in favour of adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply to assist in the prevention of tooth decay?

- No
- Yes, in children only
- Yes, in adults only
- Yes, in both adults and children
- Unsure

Q7) Where have you received information on the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies? Select multiple options if necessary.

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Television
- Radio
- Advertisements for dental products
- Health authorities
- Dentists
- Internet
- No information/source
- Other ____________________________ [specify]
- Unsure
Q8) What is your most commonly used source of drinking water?
- Tap water from public drinking water supply
- Store bought bottled water
- Rainwater tank
- Other __________________________ [specify]
- Unsure

Now I just have a few questions to help to categorise your answers

Q9) Are you?
- Male
- Female

Q10) What age group are you?
- 18-34 years
- 35-44 years
- 45-54 years
- 55+ years

Q11) Do you live?
- alone
- with a partner only
- with a partner and children
- with children only
- with friends or relatives
- other __________________________ [specify]
Q12) How old is the youngest person living in your household?

- 0-10 years
- 11-20 years
- 21-30 years
- 31-40 years
- 41+ years

Q13): How old is the oldest person living in your household?

- 11-20 years
- 21-30 years
- 31-40 years
- 41+ years

Q14) What is the occupation of the main provider for the household?

- labourer
- tradesperson
- professional
- clerical or service worker
- manager

NO MORE QUESTIONS

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey (No. 0001).

Please return it by the 29 August 2011 in the reply paid envelope.
Appendix C: Result tables

Table 2 Number and percentage of valid respondents connected to the public drinking water supply, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Connected to public drinking water supply</th>
<th>Number of valid responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>97.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Number and percentage of valid respondents knowing whether fluoride has or has not been added to the public drinking water supply, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of current fluoridation status of the water supply</th>
<th>Number of valid responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>60.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure fluoride is added</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure fluoride is not added</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation</th>
<th>Number of valid responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>50.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>22.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>26.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation by knowledge of current fluoridation status of the public drinking water supply, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge of current fluoridation status of public drinking water supply</th>
<th>Agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure added</td>
<td>(21) 60.0%</td>
<td>(11) 31.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sure not added</td>
<td>(13) 48.2%</td>
<td>(10) 37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td>(46) 47.9%</td>
<td>(15) 15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(80) 50.6%</td>
<td>(36) 22.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their agreement with the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply, by age group, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Agree with the addition of fluoride</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>(6) 35.3%</td>
<td>(3) 17.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>(10) 62.5%</td>
<td>(2) 12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>(23) 65.7%</td>
<td>(3) 8.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>(39) 44.3%</td>
<td>(28) 31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(78) 50.0%</td>
<td>(36) 23.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their perception of the safety of fluoridation, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agrees fluoridation is safe</th>
<th>Number of valid responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>32.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their perceived safety of the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies and agreement to public water supply fluoridation, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perceived safety of the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies</th>
<th>Agreement to public water supply fluoridation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(74) 97.4%</td>
<td>(2) 2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
<td>(28) 93.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>(6) 11.5%</td>
<td>(6) 11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(80) 50.6%</td>
<td>(36) 22.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 9 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their perception of the efficacy of fluoridation, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agrees fluoridation can help prevent tooth decay</th>
<th>Number of valid responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not stated</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, by age group, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Agreement that the addition of fluoride to public water supplies can help prevent tooth decay</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-34</td>
<td>(6) 35.3%</td>
<td>(2) 11.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>(9) 56.3%</td>
<td>(3) 18.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>(23) 67.6%</td>
<td>(3) 8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55+</td>
<td>(39) 47.6%</td>
<td>(17) 20.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(77) 51.7%</td>
<td>(25) 16.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation by their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreement that the addition of fluoride to public water supplies can help prevent tooth decay</th>
<th>Agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>(1) 4.0%</td>
<td>(23) 92.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>(9) 19.1%</td>
<td>(7) 14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>(68) 87.2%</td>
<td>(3) 3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(78) 52.0%</td>
<td>(33) 22.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 Number and percentage of valid respondents (who agreed to fluoridation) and their perception of the benefits of the addition of fluoride in public drinking water supplies, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception of the benefits of the addition of fluoride</th>
<th>Number of valid responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults only</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children Only</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults and children</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unsure</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NB – This table adds to 76.

Table 13 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their most commonly used source of drinking water

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most commonly used source of drinking water</th>
<th>Number of valid responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tap water from public water supply</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>74.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rain water</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottled water</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 14 Number and percentage of valid respondents and their agreement that the addition of fluoride to public water supplies can help prevent tooth decay by water source, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most commonly used source of drinking water</th>
<th>Agreement that the addition of fluoride to public water supplies can help prevent tooth decay</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>(10) 27.8%</td>
<td>(9) 25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap</td>
<td>(15) 13.3%</td>
<td>(38) 33.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(25) 16.8%</td>
<td>(47) 31.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 15 Number and percentage of valid respondents agreement to the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies by water source, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Most commonly used source of drinking water</th>
<th>Agreement to public drinking water supply fluoridation</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Unsure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tap water</td>
<td>(22) 19.0%</td>
<td>(33) 28.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rain water</td>
<td>(11) 34.4%</td>
<td>(6) 18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottled water</td>
<td>(2) 28.6%</td>
<td>(3) 42.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>(1) 100.0%</td>
<td>(0) 0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(36) 23.1%</td>
<td>(42) 26.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16 Percentage of respondents and their source of information about adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply, Moora

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
<th>Newspaper</th>
<th>Magazine</th>
<th>Television</th>
<th>Radio</th>
<th>Dental Products Ads</th>
<th>Health Authorities</th>
<th>Dentists</th>
<th>Internet</th>
<th>No information</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Unsure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Counts</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>17.6%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total counts for this question: 276 responses from 148 respondents
Multiple responses were possible for this question.
Percentage sum is a percentage of respondents (not responses) and therefore exceeds 100.
Appendix D: Respondents’ comments

All comments are presented verbatim (apart from spelling corrections).

- It's what I was told at school in the 80's.
- tests support evidence
- fluoride helps to strengthen teeth
- Had it in water supply in the city.
- just look at the poms there terrible
- lived in USA until I was 15 had hardly any cavities till I came to Australia within 6 yrs all out. Due to no fluoride in water
- You see the difference in people who grew up with fluoride and those older folk who didn't
- I was given fluoride tablets as a child in the bush - I am 57 and only lost 1 tooth so far
- definitely. I would be very happy to see this introduced
- helpful
- all the science is proof and aboriginal teeth in the Pilbara are perfect as natural fluoride to 0.5 mg/L
- most water has fluoride in it naturally
- I haven't really looked at the research but if it helps them YES to Q3,4 and 5
- I grew up with fluoride
- As a child we were given fluoride tablets and this has led to us having strong healthy teeth
- Any small addition of fluoride is beneficial
- tests show yes
- I believe this works as prevention of tooth decay
- was a dental nurse for 30 years
- I seem to write big cheques for dentists
- not everyone brushes twice daily and it'll be a boost to peoples fluoride in take
- NO more than adults and children brushing their teeth from public information and advertising
• Because it won’t completely cure tooth decay & diets will
• cleaning teeth often helps tooth decay and what's one diet
• However I do also believe that too much fluoride can cause decay. This have to be monitored.
• I have had no fillings after growing up drinking tap water. My wife has many fillings after growing up with rain water.
• can be taken individually
• Regular brushing is enough. Kids should know this from a young age.
• The Moora water is hard and also you get itchiness sometimes after showering
• I don't think enough people drink tap water to make a difference
• works in areas where naturally occurring fluoride is in water
• I am understanding that fluoride helps with teeth conditioning. I hope it doesn't create stones in liver, Gall and kidneys
• Did not have fluoride where I grew up. Tooth decay is better avoided with dental hygiene and/or dietary choices
• Why not have free or subsidised tablets available and people can choose to administer to kids as we did?
• Other countries have never added or have deleted fluoride they have good teeth. Europe Asia
• Don't know enough about fluoride
• Dental decay is not only caused by lack of fluoride
• Calcium Fluoride occurs naturally in water. Sodium Fluoride (added) is a poison & by-product of aluminium manufacture
• Probably need more than this to stop tooth decay, dental hygiene and regular dentist visits are more beneficial
• My daughter had an allergy to fluoride when she was a baby
• Tooth pastes have enough = There are too many unnecessary additives in our foods now
• No I don't. It causes brittle bone and goodness knows what else, early onset of brain disease in particular. I recommend you go home and take a good dose of monosodiumfluoroacetate and do us a favour.
• only have media reports to justify statement
• fluoride has also been credited with effects on mental alertness (negative)
Water Fluoridation Survey 2011

How to complete this form:
Answer questions by ticking only the single most appropriate option unless otherwise specified.
Please provide additional comments in the space provided.

Q1) Is your residence connected to the public water supply?

☐ No (Go to Q3)
☒ Yes (Go to Q2)
☐ Unsure (Go to Q2)

Q2) Do you know whether fluoride has or has not been added to your public water supply?

☒ No, I don’t know if fluoride has been added to the public water supply
☐ Yes, I am sure the public water supply has had fluoride added
☐ Yes, I am sure the public water supply has not had fluoride added

Q3) Do you agree with the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply?

☐ Yes
☒ No, I know it is illegal to add it in bathing areas so where have you been in a public hot tubs or spa I suppose?
☐ Unsure

Q4) Do you believe that the addition of fluoride to the public drinking water supply is safe?

No I do not, it causes birth defects & goodness knows what else, only one of their items in particular
☒ Yes, I recommend you go home and take a good, long
☐ No, I recommend you go home and do us a favour
☐ Unsure
Q5) Do you believe that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay?

- No (enter comment Q5a) (Go to Q7)
- Yes (enter comment Q5a) (Go to Q6)
- Unsure (Go to Q6)

Q5a) Comment

(specify)

Q6) Would you be in favour of adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply to assist in the prevention of tooth decay?

- No
- Yes, in children only
- Yes, in adults only
- Yes, in intellectually challenged public servants only
- Yes, in both adults and children
- Unsure

Q7) Where have you received information on the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies? Select multiple options if necessary.

- Newspapers
- Magazines
- Television
- Radio
- Internet
- Advertisements for dental products
- Health authorities in UK, Scandinavia, Europe, USA
- Dentists
- Internet
- Other (specify)

- Unsure

...
Q5) Do you believe that the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies can help prevent tooth decay?

☐ No (enter comment Q5a) (Go to Q7)
☐ Yes (enter comment Q5a) (Go to Q6)
☐ Unsure (Go to Q6)

Q5a) Comment: Fluoride, as used in drinking water, contains uranium, arsenic, cadmium, aluminium and lead. Some of which are known to be HIGHLY CARCINOGENIC.

Sodium fluoride is also used in insecticide, rodenticide, herbicide & was added to nerve gas.

Q6) Would you be in favour of adding fluoride to the public drinking water supply to assist in the prevention of tooth decay?

☑ No, in children only
☐ Yes, in children only
☐ Yes, in adults only
☐ Yes, in both adults and children
☐ Unsure

Q6a) Comment: It has also been stated that there are only three possible reasons that politicians permit public water to be fluoridated:

* Ignorance
* Stupidity
* Corruption.

Q7) Where have you received information on the addition of fluoride to public drinking water supplies? Select multiple options if necessary.

☐ Newspapers
☐ Magazines
☐ Television
☐ Radio
☐ Advertisements for dental products
☐ Health authorities
☐ Dentists
☐ No information/source
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