



Cover Memorandum/Staff Report

File #: 25-025

Agenda Date: 1/7/2025

Item #: 5.A.3.

TO: Mayor and Commissioners
FROM: Hassan Hadjimiry, P.E. Utilities Director
THROUGH: Terrence R. Moore, ICMA-CM
DATE: January 7, 2025

POLICY CONSIDERATIONS REGARDING FLUORIDATION OF POTABLE WATER

Recommended Action:

Motion to consider the City of Delray Beach (City) discontinue the addition of fluoride to the public water system.

Background:

In the Mid 1980's, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) encouraged public water providers to fluoridate drinking water to prevent tooth decay. In response, the City began adding fluorosilicic acid in late 1989 to maintain a fluoride concentration of 0.5mg/l in drinking water, consistent with federal and state recommendations at the time. Over the past thirty-five (35) + years, the City has adhered to these standards, incurring annual expenditures of over \$50,000 for both the chemical and the maintenance of the equipment necessary for fluoridation

Recently, FDOH has revised its position and no longer recommend the addition of fluoride to public water supplies. As stated in the attached November 22, 2024's issue of Guidance for Community Water Fluoridation, it is clearly stated that "due to the neuropsychiatric risk associated with fluoride exposure, particularly in pregnant women and children, and the wide availability of alternative sources of fluoride for dental health, the **State Surgeon General recommends against water fluoridation.**"

Municipalities across the United States, including several in South Florida, have already discontinued fluoridation. This trend suggests growing consensus on the matter, particularly in areas where alternative fluoride sources (e.g., dental products) are widely available.

Given the revised guidance from FDOH, the financial burden of continued fluoridation, the safety risks of handling this chemical by Utilities staff and the regional shift away from the practice, it is recommended that the City discontinue the addition of fluoride to the public water system.

City Attorney Review:

N/A

Funding Source/Financial Impact:

N/A

Timing of Request:

N/A