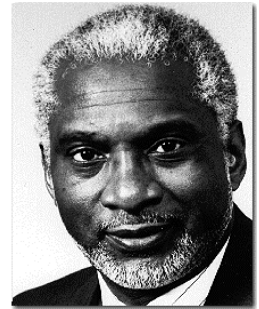




**Surgeon General David Satcher Address
National Fluoridation Summit
9/8/00**



Greetings and Congratulations to all of you attending the National Fluoridation Summit in Sacramento. I want to express my appreciation and gratitude for the work that each of you is doing to promote water fluoridation. My schedule did not permit my attendance at this meeting. However, as you know, I have asked Dr. Caswell Evans to represent me and to speak on my behalf. Many of you know and have worked with Dr. Evans. As a result of his many years in California and you may know that he has served as executive editor and project director for the surgeon general's report on Oral Health. The first ever Surgeons General's report on Oral Health which we've released, found that Community Water Fluoridation is an effective, safe and ideal Public Health measure that benefits individuals of all ages and economic strata.

The Centers for Disease Control prevention also has recognized water fluoridation as one of the ten great public health achievements of the 20th century. The benefits of community water fluoridation among children have been well documented through numerous studies over many years showing larger declines in caries experience for children. Particularly during the growth period, during which their dietary and home care practices placed them at greater risk for dental caries.

The benefits of caries reduction accrues to children regardless of the income of their families, their ethnicity, or cultural heritage. High above, it is also clear that these are benefits for adults as witnessed by reductions in adults for root surfaces caries. When looked at another way, water fluoridation is a powerful tool in our efforts to eliminate health disparities among populations. Water Fluoridation is also a bargain ranging in cost from 68 cents per year per person for those served by large water systems to \$3.00 per year per person served by small systems. However, not all people have access to this critical public health measure.

In fact, over one-third of the U.S. population lacks water fluoridation. On a more positive note, about one hundred forty five million people or sixty-two percent served by public water supplies consume water with optimal levels of fluoride. The Healthy People 2010 objectives for the nation targets seventy-five percent or twenty-one percent increase in the percentage of the population served by community water systems with optimally fluoridated water.

While we can be pleased with what has already been accomplished, it is clear that there is much yet to be done. This meeting is important and this meeting is timely. Recent progress with fluoridation in California and other states with municipalities have served as a model for the nation. So I commend all of you who have worked so hard and urge you to work even harder.

Congratulations to The California Dental Association, Delta Dental Plan of California, The California Fluoridation Task Force, The American Dental Association, and The National Center for Fluoridation Policy and Research for developing the collaboration which has lead to this historic meeting.

So, best wishes for a productive meeting and uplifting deliberations.