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Statement on Fluoridation  
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Assistant Secretary for Health, H.E.W.

Charles C. Edwards, M.D., Assistant Secretary for Health, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is the principal advisor and assistant to the Secretary on health policy and all health related activities in the Department. He provides leadership and guidance on activities including research and development, education and training, organization, financing, and delivery of health care services; and problems of public and environmental health. Dr. Edwards was formerly Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration. His prior experience also includes service with the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, Iowa Methodist and Mercy Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa, Georgetown University Medical School, Washington, D.C. and as Associate Director of Medical Education, American Medical Association.

The following statement on fluoridation was issued on July 9, 1973 by Dr. Edwards as Assistant Secretary for Health, H.E.W.

Fluoridation is a proven public health measure which can alleviate one of the Nation's leading health problems -- dental decay. Decades of research, followed by over a quarter-century of practical demonstration, have shown that the adjustment of the fluoride content of a water supply is a safe and effective means of preventing nearly two out of three cavities.

No other preventive dental health measure can as effectively reach all Americans without regard to socio-economic or educational status. Studies have shown that costs of dental care for children are about one-half as much in fluoridated communities as in non-fluoridated communities.

The prevalence and expense of dental decay underscore the pressing need to make the benefits of fluoridation available to everyone.

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