

133 Molesworth Street  
PO Box 5013  
Wellington 6140  
New Zealand  
T+64 4 496 2000

25 August 2022

s 9(2)(a)

By email: s 9(2)(a)  
Ref: H2022008906

Tēnā koe s 9(2)(a)

### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) to Manatū Hauora (Ministry of Health) on 28 July 2022 for information relating to community water fluoridation. Each part of your request has been responded to below.

- 1) *How much of our drinking water has already fluoride added to it and in which cities/communities is this?*

Approximately 51% of the New Zealand population receive fluoridated drinking water. As of July 2022, the following local authorities have all or some of their water supplies fluoridated for populations over 500:

- Wellington City Council
- Manawatu District Council
- Invercargill City Council
- Masterton District Council
- Palmerston North City Council
- Hamilton City Council
- Gisborne District Council
- Upper Hutt City Council
- Stratford District Council
- Porirua City Council
- Auckland Council
- Manawatu District Council
- Clutha District Council
- Dunedin City Council
- Waikato District Council
- Ashburton District Council
- Whakatane District Council
- Kapiti Coast District Council
- Taupō District Council
- Thames-Coromandel District Council

Section 2.4.1 of the report, *Review of the benefits and costs of water fluoridation in New Zealand*, includes a map (dated 2014) and accompanying explanation showing where water supplies are fluoridated. You can find this report here:

[www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/review-benefits-costs-water-fluoridation-new-zealand-apr16.pdf](http://www.health.govt.nz/system/files/documents/publications/review-benefits-costs-water-fluoridation-new-zealand-apr16.pdf)

2) *How much fluoride is being added to our drinking water (parts per million and or mg/Liter)?*

The Ministry of Health recommends that local authorities ensure they are fluoridating at the optimal level of between 0.7 ppm and 1.0 ppm.

3) *How is this being added and how is accidental overtreatment being prevented and reversed*

4) *How are citizens going to be notified in time in case of overdoses?*

Local authorities and water suppliers are responsible for providing safe drinking water to their communities and need to meet the Drinking Water Standards of New Zealand. The Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand set the maximum acceptable value (MAV) for a range of chemicals and organisms that may be present in drinking water, including fluoride. You can find the Drinking Water Standards here:

[www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2022/0168/latest/whole.html](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2022/0168/latest/whole.html)

There are a range of methods that local authorities use to add fluoride to drinking water. If you are interested in a specific local authority's process, that information would be held by them.

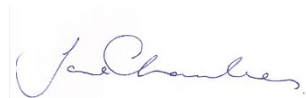
If drinking water does not comply with the Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand, Taumata Arowai will be responsible for addressing any concerns. You can find out more information about Taumata Arowai here: [www.taumataarowai.govt.nz/](http://www.taumataarowai.govt.nz/)

Mandatory reporting of exceedances of the Maximum Acceptable Value of fluoride is required by Taumata Arowai in line with the Drinking Water Standards.

I trust this information fulfils your request. Under section 28(3) of the Act, you have the right to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made under this request. The Ombudsman may be contacted by email at: [info@ombudsman.parliament.nz](mailto:info@ombudsman.parliament.nz) or by calling 0800 802 602.

Please note that this response, with your personal details removed, may be published on the Manatū Hauora website at: [www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests](http://www.health.govt.nz/about-ministry/information-releases/responses-official-information-act-requests).

Nāku noa, nā



Jane Chambers  
**Group Leader, Public Health Policy and Regulation**  
**Public Health Agency, Ministry of Health**