Drinking Water Fluoridation: Status Report

Barbara Gastian
Compliance Manager
April 9, 2014
Fluoridation of Albuquerque’s Drinking Water

• Early 1970’s: City of Albuquerque begins fluoridation of municipal water supply

• 2005: Water Authority continues the practice after assuming control of the drinking water system

• Target level 0.9 to 1.2 parts per million (ppm)
2006 National Academies of Science Assessment

- Undertaken at request of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
- Reviewed new data on fluoride
- Resulted in recommendation that EPA update health and exposure assessments to take into account:
  - bone and dental effects; and
  - consideration of all sources of fluoride.
January 2011 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Proposal

- Proposed new recommended optimal fluoride level 0.7 ppm
- Reduced from 0.7-1.2 ppm
- Final optimal level recommendation expected spring of 2011
- Water Authority stopped adding supplemental fluoride in March 2011 pending final recommendation
- Final recommendation still pending
EPA Maximum Contaminant Level (MCL)

- Primary MCL 4.0 ppm
- Secondary MCL 2.0 ppm
Current Drinking Water Fluoride Concentration in Water Authority Service Area

Naturally occurring fluoride levels
- Production wells: average 0.7 ppm
- Surface Water Treatment Plant (San Juan-Chama project): averages 0.4 ppm

Blended water supply
- Quarterly distribution system monitoring:
  - 2012 average 0.5 ppm
  - 2013 average 0.4 ppm
Proposal Before the Water Authority Board

• Add supplemental fluoride to bring entire service area to CDC optimal 0.7 ppm level

• For maximum operational efficiency, fluoride would be added at a central location: Surface Water Treatment Plant (San Juan-Chama project)

• Estimated $400,000 infrastructure cost (one-time cost)

• Estimated $100,000 yearly Operations & Maintenance costs