

MEDIA RELEASE

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Fluoride: Council votes in favour of water fluoridation

Gunnedah is set to join the vast majority of New South Wales, with Council voting to request approval from NSW Health to commence fluoridation of the Gunnedah water supply at tonight's Ordinary Council meeting.

The decision to add fluoride to Gunnedah's town water supply is reflective of national practice and health policy, with 93% of the population of NSW connected to a fluoridated water supply.

Gunnedah Shire Mayor Jamie Chaffey spoke in support of the decision, noting that the move to fluoridate Gunnedah's water supply had been under consideration since 2009, with a mountain of information and data reviewed by Council over this period.

"Water fluoridation is safe and has long been common practice in Australia, with evidence clearly supporting long term health benefits, particularly for the prevention of tooth decay," Cr Chaffey said.

"By adding fluoride to our water supply, we are able to ensure preventative measures are in place, in a socially equitable way, to safeguard the oral health of our community, particularly our youngest citizens who will benefit most from fluoridated water.

"Councillors have not made this decision lightly, and have considered all submissions tabled on the issue, both for and against. I am satisfied that the community has had the opportunity to present their views, and that the benefits of treating Gunnedah's water supply is in the best interest of public health.

"I commend my fellow Councillors on the considered and measured approach taken in arriving at this decision, and understand whilst not everyone will agree with the outcome, that Council has a duty to make a decision on the matter and we have not shied away from that responsibility," Cr Chaffey concluded.

Upon approval from NSW Health to proceed, Council will begin the process of planning for and constructing a fluoride dosing station which will deliver regulated volumes of fluoride into Gunnedah's water supply. Fluoridation of the Gunnedah water supply is projected to commence in 2020.

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