

Contact: Nick Hernandez  
Phone: (620) 441-4415  
Fax: (620) 441-0869  
[nhernandez@arkansascityks.gov](mailto:nhernandez@arkansascityks.gov)

City Manager's Office  
City of Arkansas City  
118 W. Central Ave.  
Arkansas City, KS 67005



# News Release

## City of Arkansas City honored for continuing fluoridation efforts

*Ark City one of 20 communities nationally to be awarded for its 'reaffirmation'*

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (December 6, 2017) — The City of Arkansas City was honored Tuesday night by a pair of state officials in recognition of its April 2016 decision to maintain water fluoridation.

The City was given a 2016 Community Fluoridation Reaffirmation Award “for contributions made on behalf of community water fluoridation.” It was one of just 20 communities so honored nationally in 2017.

Presenting a certificate of appreciation for the award were Dr. Cathleen Taylor-Osbourne, state dental director with the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE), and Tanya Dorf Brunner, executive director of Oral Health Kansas, Inc. Local dentist Dr. Nick Rogers also attended the ceremony.

Other entities involved with the award are the American Dental Association (ADA), Association of State and Territorial Dental Directors (ASTDD), and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Originally, the award was to be presented Nov. 2 at the 2017 Water Fluoridation Quality Awards Reception in Olathe, but no City representative was able to attend that event, so Brunner and Taylor-Osbourne asked if they could come to Tuesday’s commission meeting to present the award in person.

“The advantage of fluoride in drinking water is its ability to deliver a low level of fluoride frequently to large numbers of individuals at a low cost, with a resultant substantial cost savings due to a decrease in tooth decay,” Taylor-Osbourne said. “Communities that adjust the fluoride level in their drinking water provide lower concentration and consistent fluoride exposures compared to other fluoride choices.”

The City Commission voted 4-0 on April 5, 2016, to add a sodium fluoride saturator system to the new Water Treatment Facility, for a cost not to exceed \$58,380, after testimony from Rogers and others.

Despite public pressure from many citizens last year to abandon public water fluoridation, then-Mayor Chad Giles cited the expertise of the local dentists who spoke as a heavy influence on the commission’s final vote to continue the effort. In particular, Rogers had presented KDHE statistics

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showing that Winfield's rate of childhood dental caries (tooth decay) is higher than Arkansas City's. He attributed this difference to the latter city's decision to fluoridate its water, which Winfield does not do.

Those numbers indicate that from 2012 through 2015, Cowley County's overall untreated decay rate declined from just under 12 percent to slightly more than 9 percent. But in that same time frame, the rate in the Arkansas City Public School District fell from slightly more than 10 percent to a little more than 7 percent. This is consistently lower than the rate in the Winfield school district, which fell to slightly more than 12 percent from a high of nearly 18 percent in 2012-13.

Wichita, which also does not fluoridate its water, actually saw the untreated decay rate rise from nearly 18 percent to almost 21 percent in 2014-15 — nearly three times higher than in Arkansas City.

"I would like to thank the City for passing the fluoridation issue and putting fluoride in the water," Rogers said. "This is one thing that really does make a difference."

"Community water fluoridation has been demonstrated to be safe, cost-effective, and beneficial through every stage of life and for all people, regardless of age, race, ethnicity or socioeconomic status," Taylor-Osbourne said. "Water fluoridation reduces oral health disparities by creating a healthy environment. ... Community water fluoridation has an individual lifetime cost less than the cost of a single dental filling. Other forms of fluoride, such as fluoride toothpaste and clinical interventions, complement community water fluoridation. Since the epidemiological, environmental and laboratory studies confirm the association (among) naturally occurring, optimal levels of fluoride in water supplies, improved dental health and absence of any negative health impacts, community water fluoridation has been the cornerstone of caries prevention in the United States. Indeed ... the CDC has recognized water fluoridation as one of (the) 10 most important public health achievements of the 20th century."

Ark City is approaching its 50th anniversary of community water fluoridation, Taylor-Osbourne said.

### **In other business Tuesday night, the City Commission:**

- Presented a Good Neighbor Award to Robert Courtland for his community volunteerism efforts.
- Witnessed the promotion of Arkansas City Police Department Officers Chase Hobart and Ted Shinneman to the rank of Master Police Officer. Police Chief Dan Ward praised both officers.
- Unanimously approved the following consent agenda items:
  - Approving the Nov. 21, 2017, regular meeting minutes as written.
  - Ratifying Mayor Dan Jurkovich's reappointment of Mary Benton as the Ark City representative to the City-Cowley County Board of Health for a three-year term.

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- Approving Resolution No. 2017-12-3140, authorizing the City to execute a Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) waiver for the 2018 fiscal year.
- Heard a first reading of and voted unanimously to approve Ordinance No. 2017-12-4445, adopting the budgeted employee pay plan for 2018 and repealing Ordinance No. 2016-12-4422.
- Voted unanimously to approve Resolution No. 2017-12-3141, approving a notice of budget hearing for publication and scheduling a public hearing at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 19 in the commission room at City Hall, 118 W. Central Ave., to amend the 2017 budget for the City of Arkansas City.
- Heard updates from City Manager Nick Hernandez regarding the governing body handbook, financial tools available to developers, the employee Christmas party and the Water Treatment Facility project, including a new waste line from the plant to the Wastewater Treatment Facility.
- Discussed options for reconstruction of the intersection of Fourth Street and Washington Avenue, including brick or concrete replacement. Public Works Director Eric Broce said he would obtain costs for the additional options discussed and relay them to the commissioners.

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