

**Council is directed under legislation\* to fluoridate the Port Macquarie Hastings Water Supply. Council is also unable, as required by legislation\*, to discontinue fluoridating its water supply without the written approval or directive from NSW Health\*\*. The results of this poll will be used to determine community sentiment.**

## Yes or No:

## Would you prefer that Council stop adding fluoride (hydrofluorosilicic acid) to the public water supply?

**The following is information to support the 'NO' case - i.e. 'NO' means you would prefer Council continue to add fluoride to the water supply.**

Having healthy teeth is really important for our overall health, wellbeing and quality of life. A healthy mouth enables you to eat, speak and socialise, without pain, discomfort or embarrassment<sup>(1)</sup>.

Tooth decay is one of the most common chronic health problems in Australia but rates of decay are much lower in communities with water fluoridation<sup>(2)</sup>.

The consequences of tooth decay include dental pain, concern about appearance, costs due to dental treatment and time off school and work.

One of the safest and effective ways to reduce tooth decay is to fluoridate the water supply. Recent Australian research states that access fluoridated water from an early age is associated with less tooth decay in adults<sup>(3)</sup>.

That National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is an Australian Government agency that funds health and medical research.

The NHMRC regularly reviews the scientific evidence on this topic to make sure that research and evidence supports health advice. They have released a public statement which concluded that water fluoridation safely and effectively reduces tooth decay across the population.

Fluoridated water is the primary source of fluoride exposure and helps reduce tooth decay for all, at all stages of life. Fluoridation of drinking water particularly benefits children, and those on a lower income who tend to have higher rates of dental decay and less access to dental treatment.

The NSW Department of Health is the agency responsible in NSW for setting the amount of fluoride that should be added to town water supplies. Taking into consideration fluoride in other sources such as foods, drinks, and dental products only very small amounts of fluoride are needed in drinking water to protect teeth against decay.

Information about fluoride can be found at

**NSW Health** - [www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Pages/fluoridation.aspx](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/water/Pages/fluoridation.aspx)

**Australian Dental Association** - [www.adansw.com.au/Community/Fact-Sheets](http://www.adansw.com.au/Community/Fact-Sheets)

### References

1. NHMRC Water Fluoridation and human health in Australia: Questions and Answers <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/2017-public-statement-water-fluoridation-and-human-health> cited 25/6/21
2. World Health Organization. Guideline: Sugars intake for adults and children. Geneva : World Health Organization, 2015 cited in NHMRC above
3. [www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/fluoridation-public-statement.pdf](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/sites/default/files/documents/reports/fluoridation-public-statement.pdf) Cited 25/6/21

**\*Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Act 1957 & Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Regulation 2012 and 2017.**

**\*\*Public Health Act 2010, Public Health Regulation 2012 & Code of Practice for Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies (NSW Department of Health 2011).**

**Participation in this poll is voluntary and the results are non-binding. This information has been sourced from external organisations as referenced. Port Macquarie Hastings Council does not guarantee the accuracy of this information and recommends you independently inform yourself prior to responding to the poll to be held in conjunction with the Local Government Election on 4 September 2021. Please see overleaf.**