Community Water Fluoridation Wins at the Ballot Box: Lessons Learned from November 4, 2014

Webinar
December 18, 2014
Hosts

• DentaQuest Foundation
• Health Resources in Action
• Campaign for Dental Health
• Children’s Dental Health Project
• Pew Children’s Dental Campaign
Panelists

• Marjorie Stocks, Fluoridation Consultant and Gayle Mathe, Director of Community Programs and Public Policy, CA Dental Association Foundation

• Megan Foreman, Policy Director, Oral Health KS

• Emily Firman, Sr. Program Officer and Valaree Squires, Consultant, WA Dental Service Foundation
GoToWebinar

All attendees will be muted during the webinar.

Use the Question Box to type in your questions.
Healdsburg California
November 2014
California Dental Association

Marjorie Stocks, MPH, Fluoridation Consultant,
California Dental Association Foundation

Gayle Mathe, RDH, Public Policy
California Dental Association
Healdsburg:

- Fluoridated since the 50’s.
- Only fluoridated city in the County.
- 11,000 residents, 6000 eligible voters.
- 66% voted to keep fluoridation.
- Located in Sonoma County about 1 ½ hours north of San Francisco.
  - Wine Country.
  - Russian River Watershed area.
  - Fluoridation issue active in Sonoma county for 2-3 years.
Campaign Strategy

Worked with campaign manager and local residents to determine best signatories on ballot and frame campaign messaging.

Obtained signatures from: Dentists, pediatricians, former elected officials, moms, school nurse, hygienists.

- Sensitive to ethnicity; Latino/Hispanic population.
- Ballot language was positive; consistent messaging.
Community Organizing

Listening

• Met with community leaders/activists who were longtime residents. They described community:
  • Quintessential small town.
  • Families are important.

• Held initial organizing meeting at a Local hospital.
  • Obtained signatories for ballot arguments and photos.
Who communicated with whom?

• Some of our allies had relationships or standing that made them the ideal persons to talk to a key stakeholder.
Local Champion

*Healdsburg dentist*

*Dr. Shawn Widick*

- Dr. Widick, along with Dr. Pollick, presented at a local election event. The opposition was present.
- Dr. Widick’s communication with the media was focused and consistent. Stayed on message!
- Dr. Widick contacted other dentists in town. Consultant visited all the dental offices twice to obtain endorsements, and distribute literature and signs.
Communication and Messaging

- Campaign created a website:
  - Ballot arguments; Q and A
  - List of supporters
  - Links to ilikemyteeth.org

- Garnered endorsements from the local press: *Sonoma Press Democrat* and *Healdsburg Tribune*. This was essential.

- Obtained photos and endorsements from long-time respected business leaders and individuals.

- Placed a photo ad in the *Healdsburg Tribune* with Healdsburg dentists.
Here’s why dentists, physicians, Nurses and Dental Hygienists Stand United Behind Measure P:

☐ Healdsburg’s water has been fluoridated for generations.

☐ Fluoride is a mineral that occurs naturally in water.

☐ Fluoridation protects everyone – young and old alike, at all income levels.

☐ Nearly every health and scientific organization that has addressed the topic recognizes the benefit of water fluoridation.

☐ Fluoridation is the single most cost-effective preventive oral health program available.

“T’ve spent my entire career working to keep children and families healthy. Measure P ensures the continued dental health of families across Healdsburg, and I encourage you to vote “Yes” on Measure P.”

- Dr. Guadalupe Nieto Hedrick, M.D., Healdsburg Pediatrician

“Measure P ensures we continue to provide residents and families with a low-cost way to help prevent dental decay in our community. Fluoridation remains the most affordable preventative measure to protect our teeth. That’s why dentists agree – Measure P is good for our teeth and good for Healdsburg.”

- Dr. Shawn Widick, DDS, Healdsburg Resident and Dentist

“Each day, I work with impoverished and disadvantaged residents to provide them with access to quality healthcare services. Measure P is an easy way for families of all ages and income levels to keep their teeth strong and healthy— that’s why I hope you join me and vote ‘Yes’ on Measure P.”

- Kathy Kane, RDHAP, Healdsburg Dental Hygienist

www.YesonPHealdsburg.com
Campaign Elements

- County is mostly mail-in ballots.
  - Targeted mailings.
  - Mailers were consistent with messaging.
  - Featured faces and names of residents.
- Walked precincts.
- Some phoning.
PROTECTING SMILES IN HEALDSBURG SINCE THE 1950S
PROVEN • PREVENTION • PROTECTION

As you prepare to cast your vote on Measure P, get the facts about water fluoridation in our community:

• **Healdsburg’s water has been fluoridated for generations.** Grandparents, parents, and children have benefited from stronger teeth and good dental health.

• **Fluoride is a mineral that occurs naturally in water** and when adjusted to the optimal level, it significantly reduces tooth decay.

• **Fluoridation protects everyone** – young and old alike, at all income levels. Evidence shows that people living in non-fluoridated communities experience more fillings, root canals and extractions than those living in fluoridated areas.

• **Nearly every health and scientific organization in the United States supports water fluoridation,** including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Cancer Society, the World Health Organization, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Dental Association and the American Medical Association.

• **Fluoridation is the single most cost-effective preventive oral health program available.**

For more information about the benefits of water fluoridation, please visit [www.illkemyteeth.org](http://www.illkemyteeth.org).
Organized Opposition

- Opposition leader from another city in the County; had been active throughout the county.
- They were well organized and got their message out early.
- The number of active opposition campaigners far outnumbered the pro-fluoridation campaigners.
- They walked precincts twice.
- They placed many yard signs.
- They were effective in getting radio talk show time.
**What worked?**

**Anecdotal:**

- Healdsburg had been fluoridated for generations with good results.
- Newspaper, healthcare, and local leadership endorsements were strong.
- Residents did not believe the health claims of the opposition.
- Dr. Widick and others spoke from their own experience as practicing dentists.
- No additional cost was involved; good benefit for the money.
- Social equity issue.
Victory in Salina, KS

Megan Foreman, Policy Director
Oral Health Kansas
Fluoride in Kansas

Public Vote
Salina approved (2014)
Wichita defeated (2012)
Humboldt defeated (2009)
Hutchinson defeated (2004)
McPherson defeated (2001)
Leavenworth approved (2001)

City Council Vote
Garden City approved (2006)
Maize approved (2003)
Wamego approved (2001)
Winfield defeated (2000)
Hiawatha approved (2000)
Newton approved (1999)
Hesston approved (1999)
Kanopolis approved (1999)
Stockton approved (1999)
Harper defeated (1999)

Board Action
Pottawatomie Rural Water District #2 approved (2000)
Woodson County Rural Water Dist. #1 approved (1999)

State Legislation
HB 2372 approved (2014)
City of Salina

- Kansas’ 10th largest city
- About 50,000 residents; 18,000 registered voters within the city limits
- Named Kansas’ Retirement Hub (Wichita Business Journal 2012) and Best Place to Raise Kids (Business Week 2009)
- See themselves as family-friendly, neighborly and pragmatic; population well-educated, well-traveled
- Cosmopolitan small town
- Fluoridated since 1968
Why Did We Win?

• Raised $50,000 in one week
  – Kansas health foundations (UMHMF), KS Dental Assn., Oral Health Kansas, area dental societies
• Ran a political campaign; employed a professional campaign manager
  – The work was about **getting votes**, public health education a distant second for 13 weeks
• The campaign messaging was clear, simple and consistent throughout.
  – Positive, happy message, fit the community of Salina
• We papered the town, ALL materials branded.
  – 1500 yard signs
The Reason We Really Won
Local Champions

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Robert Freelove, MD</th>
<th>Juliana Coletto, DDS</th>
<th>Cindy Reed, DDS</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>David Battin, MD, FACC</td>
<td>John Miller, DDS</td>
<td>Alan Reed, DDS</td>
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<td>Alisa Bridge, MD</td>
<td>John Marietta, DDS</td>
<td>Ashley Young, DDS</td>
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<td>Ryan Payne, MD</td>
<td>Jack Gillam, DDS</td>
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<td>Carmen San Martin, JD</td>
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<td>Thomas Jett, DDS</td>
<td>Kristin VanCourt, RN</td>
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<td>Erica Red Corn, MD</td>
<td>Jeff Koksai, DDS</td>
<td>Lisa Keller, RN</td>
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<td>Brian Schaulis, DDS</td>
<td>Janet Hansen, RN</td>
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<td>Matt Cobb, MD</td>
<td>Chuck Abbick, DDS</td>
<td>Terri Magee, RN</td>
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<td>Carmen San Martin, JD</td>
<td>Guy Gross, DDS</td>
<td>Sarah Meador, RNC</td>
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<td>Scott Owings, MD</td>
<td>Kate Gross, DDS</td>
<td>Marsha Klingzell, RDH</td>
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<td>Robert Kraft, MD</td>
<td>Michelle Nunes, DDS</td>
<td>Rhonda Scott, RDH</td>
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<td>Chuck Allred, MD</td>
<td>Lynn Wuthnow, DDS</td>
<td>Jennifer Briley, RDH</td>
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<td>Curtis Kaut, MD</td>
<td>Robert Moeller, DDS</td>
<td>Megan Richardson, RDH</td>
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<td>William Cathcart-Rake MD</td>
<td>Shachi Khatri, DDS</td>
<td>Melissa Reinwald, RDH</td>
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<td>Dirk Hutchinson, MD</td>
<td>Earl O'Hara, DDS</td>
<td>Breanne McClintock RDH</td>
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<td>Christopher Graber, MD</td>
<td>Brent Maygianes, DDS</td>
<td>Alyse Lambert, RDH</td>
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<td>Molly Carroll, MD</td>
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<td>Lisa Douglas, RDH</td>
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<td>Keir Swisher, DO</td>
<td>Jason Barth, DDS</td>
<td>Stephanie Showalter, RDH</td>
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<td>Kerry Carlson, DDS</td>
<td>Shaleigh Smith, RDH</td>
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<td>Lisa Metzen DDS</td>
<td>CA Ritter, DDS</td>
<td>Shelly Bushnell, RDH</td>
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<td>Ashley Swisher, DDS</td>
<td>Eric MacAnally, DDS</td>
<td>Mayor Aaron Houserholer</td>
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<td>Tom Saffell, DDS</td>
<td>Bruce Johnson, DDS</td>
<td>Sarah Payne</td>
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Keep Fluoride
VOTE NO

Paid for by Keep Fluoride Salina
Allison Lesko, Treasurer
1920 S. Ohio St
Salina, KS 67401
785-825-7197
info@keepfluoride.com
Salina Dentist acted as local Campaign Coordinator
Remember: Relationships

• Undergirding all of this were *previously established* solid working relationships
  – Trust already established, allowed us to work quickly
  – National, state, local
  – No one vying for power/control, just want to be effective

• We made a great TEAM
  – Weekly campaign calls; small group of 3 people main drivers of action, final sign-off on materials/activities
  – Divided tasks based on skill, resources
  – National: helped with cost analysis, media/debate training
  – State: campaign budget, relationships with funders, connections (national and local), produced many campaign materials, “bombs of awesome”
  – Local: lifeblood of campaign. Lived this for 13 weeks. Tirelessly campaigned for votes!
We Kept Fluoride
Hey Mom! Hey Dad!

Cavities are creepy.
Paying dental bills is spooky.
Having a toothache is no holiday.
Tonight, brush those ghosts’ and goblins’ teeth well and swish with Salina’s fluoridated water. It’s been protecting Salina’s teeth since 1968!

Keep Fluoride
VOTE NO

Salina’s doctors and dentists support water fluoridation because it is safe and effective.

Keep Fluoride for the Kids!
Vote NO on November 4th!

Visit www.keepfluoride.com
Daily Facebook Posts

**Keep Fluoride**

**September 19**

Argh, Matey's! We’re all for fun on Talk Like a Pirate Day, but we don’t want your teeth to look like a pirate’s! Fluoride is effective in keeping your teeth cavity free. Three cheers for fluoride, aye aye!

#keepfluoride

**Keep Fluoride**

**October 31**

"I support fluoride in our community drinking water because it is scientifically proven to reduce the incidence of tooth decay. It is the single most successful public health initiative of all time.....AND it has reduced the cost of dental care for the people of Salina more than any other single factor. If you are a tax-paying citizen of Kansas the last thing you need is to have more taxes going to fund the dental medicaid program due to an increased incidence of decay amongst our children. If fluoride is removed, this WILL happen. It's not a matter of IF, but WHEN decay increases and children suffer if our community allows this to pass." Guy Gross, DDS, FAGD
Campaign Around Town
Keeping Kalama Water Fluoridated

Emily Firman, MPH, MSW
Valaree Squires, MA
Kalama – Context

Washington State – Population: 6,971,000

- Fluoridation decided locally
- 65% of Washington residents have access
- Rollback discussions increased post Portland vote
Kalama - Context

- Fluoridation began in 1962
- Council decides fluoridation / no option for a binding ballot initiative

- Population 2,344 (2010)
  - Over 90% white
  - Median age - 41
  - Median voter age - 60
- Unions and retirees important
- Party affiliation is nearly evenly split between Republicans and Democrats
Kalama – Path to the ballot

April of 2014 - Mayor asks for a vote to remove fluoridation

- Councilwoman Mary Putka calls for a hearing instead
- We gain two weeks to organize
- Advocacy includes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Network Mobilization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Letters to council</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-inch binder to each council member</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testimony at Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local advocates meet</td>
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<td>Local 1 on 1 conversations with councilmembers</td>
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<td>Attendance at all subsequent meetings</td>
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July 2014 Kalama City Council votes to place fluoridation on a non-binding advisory ballot

- “Keep Kalama Water Fluoridated” forms & provides ballot argument for
- WDSF hires community coordinator to lead political campaign

**Campaign: July – October/November 2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grassroots/Advocacy</th>
<th>Earned/Paid Communications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yard Signs</td>
<td>The Daily News Op-eds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility Events</td>
<td>Letters to the Editor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook Page</td>
<td>Print Ads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endorsements</td>
<td>Mailers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Election Forums</td>
<td>The Daily News Editorial</td>
</tr>
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<td>Community Meetings</td>
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Kalama

The citizens of Kalama have benefited from community-fluoridated water for more than 50 years.

Joanna Boatman, a registered nurse and mayor of Kalama, initiated water fluoridation in our community in 1962. Now, 52 years later, Kalama can vote to continue enjoying the benefits of strong, healthy teeth. Ms. Boatman remembers classmates in pre-fluoride Kalama who had false teeth before high school graduation.

Let's not set our community back. Vote YES to keep Kalama Water Fluoridated.
A survey to water customers outside city limits, initiated by the mayor, and paid for by the city, had similar results.

On December 3rd, 2014 councilmember Mary Putka presided over a vote at council to keep fluoridation in Kalama.
Thank you!

Continue to submit your questions
GoToWebinar

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Use the Question Box to type in your questions.
Contact:

- **CA Dental Association Foundation**: Gayle Mathe, Gayle.Mathe@cda.org

- **Oral Health KS**: Megan Foreman, mforeman@oralhealthkansas.org

- **WA Dental Service Foundation**: Emily Firman, efirman@deltadentalwa.com