

## Alexandra Lowder

---

**Subject:** RE: Fluoride in Tewksbury Water

---

**From:** Arthur Engelhard <[acengelhard@gmail.com](mailto:acengelhard@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, April 8, 2025 6:13 AM  
**To:** Melissa Braga <[MBraga@tewksbury-ma.gov](mailto:MBraga@tewksbury-ma.gov)>  
**Cc:** Sue <[suzanne.nou@gmail.com](mailto:suzanne.nou@gmail.com)>  
**Subject:** Fluoride in Tewksbury Water

You don't often get email from [acengelhard@gmail.com](mailto:acengelhard@gmail.com). [Learn why this is important](#)

**Caution:** This email originated from outside of the organization. **Do not reply, click links, or open attachments** unless you can confirm the sender and know the content is safe. When in doubt, contact your IT Department.

Dear Members of the Tewksbury Board of Health,

I am writing to express our support for maintaining the Town of Tewksbury's policy of adding fluoride to the public water supply, based on the most credible available research, specifically the **National Institutes of Health's NTP Monograph on the State of the Science Concerning Fluoride Exposure and Neurodevelopment and Cognition (Monograph 08)**.

According to the NTP's systematic review (<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK606067/>), there is *moderate confidence* that higher fluoride exposure—**specifically levels above 1.5 mg/L (ppm)**—is associated with lower IQ in children. Crucially, this conclusion is derived largely from studies where fluoride levels **exceed those typically used in U.S. water fluoridation programs**, including our own. Tewksbury's target of **0.7 ppm** is well below this threshold and aligns with the current recommendation of the U.S. Public Health Service.

To further validate this view, I reviewed numerous studies cataloged on the Fluoride Action Network's website (<https://fluoridealert.org/study-tracker/>). While many of the studies do show a similar correlation between fluoride and neurological decline, they consistently require **higher exposure levels (above 1.5 ppm)**. This supports the idea that Tewksbury's current fluoridation level **does not pose a significant risk** to childhood cognitive development.

It's worth remembering that **context and dosage matter**. Many substances/activities that are beneficial in small, consistent amounts can become harmful when consumed excessively. For example:

- **Exercise** for 30 mins per day and you will strengthen your body. But exercise for 5 hours a day for years and you will likely cause injury.
- **Water** is vital to survival and drinking 3 liters a day will keep you hydrated, but drink 6 liters a day and you will be overhydrated, possibly leading to hyponatremia.

- **Medications** like Advil are useful for pain and inflammation, but chronic overuse can damage the liver or stomach lining.

The same logic applies to fluoride: at recommended levels, it protects public dental health, particularly for children and underinsured families who may not have access to regular dental care. Removing it altogether would disproportionately impact these vulnerable groups.

That said, I am also open to reasonable compromise. Given advances in dental hygiene, toothpaste formulations, and preventive care, I would support a **modest reduction of the town's fluoridation target to 0.5 ppm**. I believe this would maintain the preventive benefit while acknowledging dental health developments and addressing some public concern.

In conclusion, I strongly encourage the Board to continue supporting water fluoridation in Tewksbury. Removing it entirely would be a disservice to those who benefit most from this public health policy.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,  
Arthur and Sue Engelhard  
865 Chandler Street