

Hydrofluorosilicic Acid Availability for Water Fluoridation

Oral health is an essential part of total body health. Over eighty years of research and experience have demonstrated that water fluoridation reduces tooth decay by at least 25% and is the most effective and cost-efficient public health strategy to prevent cavities for the entire community - especially for those least able to afford dental care.

Recent [media reports](#) have raised concerns about shortages of Hydrofluorosilicic Acid (HFS, FSA), a primary additive for water fluoridation in the U.S. While supply constraints are real, many of these accounts contain *inaccuracies* that have led some communities to unnecessarily reduce or discontinue fluoridation.

We have reviewed information from public and private sources, as well as water industry experts. Key findings include:

- 1) **There is no global shortage of FSA product.** No FSA from Israel passes through the Strait of Hormuz. The Israeli FSA supplier reports that supply remains good, and they have workforce contingency plans for times of conflict. The majority of their product is exported to Australia and England, which have not experienced any shortages. However, they play a very limited role in the U.S. market.
- 2) **U.S. supply restrictions are driven by domestic market factors**, including redirection of fluoride products to higher-demand industries such as computer chip and solar panel manufacturing; damage to U.S. production facilities during recent hurricane seasons; seasonal demand spikes in spring and summer; and limited short-term flexibility in domestic production capacity. Key sources say current disruptions should stabilize as production capacity increases, but this may take time.
- 3) **FSA supply disruptions are typically supplier-specific, not industry-wide.** As with other essential materials, relying on a single supplier can be risky during shortages. Some large water systems reduce this risk by maintaining relationships or contracts with multiple suppliers that source their product from different national sources, even at a higher cost.
- 4) Water systems, policymakers, and public health professionals should rely on verified supply-chain information and **avoid making long-term fluoridation decisions based on incomplete or inaccurate media reports**. Although one provider, George S. Coyne Chemical Co., Inc., has recently withdrawn entirely

from the fluoride additive marketplace, other major suppliers have stated they have FSA.

- 5) **From the EPA:** “We are currently contacting several NSF/ANSI 60-certified HFS suppliers that we have existing contacts with to check whether they have any available supply and if they may also be able to assist utilities experiencing shortages.”
- 6) The NSF has a [website](#), **NSF Product and Service Listings, NSF/ANSI/CAN 60 Drinking Water Treatment Chemicals - Health Effects**, that lists all companies that sell FSA and is updated daily.
- 7) **The CDC’s operational range for fluoridation is 0.6 to 1.0 mg/L (ppm) with a target of 0.7 mg/L;** this is the range for maximum benefits of fluoridation on dental health. If you are facing a shortage, continue fluoridating at the optimal fluoride level of 0.7 mg/L while you search for alternative sources of FSA.
- 8) Unfortunately, because there are local shortages in several parts of the country, we are getting reports of higher prices when product is found. Water fluoridation is an important and necessary public health measure, so the cost may need to be passed on to consumers- at least in the short term... not something anyone wants to hear- but something we’re seeing in every industry.
- 9) Consider the cost of fluoridation per person. If, for instance, it was costing \$1/person/year, and FSA triples in cost, the customer would be paying \$3/person/year. The return on investment in saved dental treatment costs for your residents is still substantial. The average cost of one dental filling is \$100-\$450. The [lifetime cost](#) of one cavity in a permanent molar is over \$6,000.
- 10) Lastly, **thank you** for providing fluoride to your residents at optimal levels. Water operators prevent more cavities than dental professionals do in their lifetimes. We need you! We will continue our efforts to locate FSA for water facilities.

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