

Executive Summary: Health Impact Review of SHB 1684

Concerning public health and fluoridation of drinking water (2022 Legislative Session)

Evidence indicates that SHB 1684 would likely result in Group A Water Systems serving 5,000 or more people per day that do not fluoridate conducting a cost analysis of community water fluoridation as part of water system planning, which would likely have no impact on community water fluoridation. The bill would also likely result in specified water systems seeking public health information and notifying customers prior to discontinuing community water fluoridation, and it is unclear how this would impact a water system's decision to discontinue or continue fluoridation. Based on these findings, the pathway to health impacts could not be completed.

BILL INFORMATION

Sponsors: Harris, Bateman, Fitzgibbon, Leavitt, Cody, Macri, Simmons, Pollet, Riccelli

Summary of Bill:

- Requires Group A Water Systems that serve 5,000 or more people per day and that do not currently fluoridate to conduct an analysis of the cost to design, install, operate, and maintain community water fluoridation when the system engages in water system planning. Allows other Group A water systems to elect into this requirement.
- Requires State Board of Health (SBOH) to adopt rules to support water systems to include community water fluoridation.
- Requires Washington State Department of Health (DOH) to create a program (subject to the availability of appropriated funding) within the Office of Drinking Water to provide engineering assistance to water systems related to upgrades, modifications, or expansions to implement or upgrade a community water fluoridation system, as long as the water system includes an engineering analysis. Allows DOH to receive funding from private sources to assist with this program.
- Requires Group A Water Systems that serve 5,000 or more people per day considering discontinuation of community water fluoridation to seek public health information from DOH and local health jurisdictions and to notify customers of this intention at least 90 days prior to a vote or decision to discontinue fluoridation. Allows other Group A water systems to elect into this requirement.
- Directs DOH to conduct an oral health equity assessment and provide recommendations to increase access to community water fluoridation to the Legislature by June 30, 2023.

HEALTH IMPACT REVIEW

Summary of Findings:

This Health Impact Review found the following evidence for provisions in SHB 1684:

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WASHINGTON STATE 
BOARD OF HEALTH

 **HEALTH EQUITY**
Governor's Interagency Council
on Health Disparities

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Pathway 1: Cost analysis for community water fluoridation

- **Informed assumption** that requiring Group A Water Systems serving 5,000 or more people per day and that do not currently fluoridate to conduct an analysis of the cost to design, install, operate, and maintain community water fluoridation as part of water system planning would result in water systems conducting this cost analysis. This assumption is based on information from key informants representing water systems.
- **Informed assumption** that water systems conducting a cost analysis of community water fluoridation as part of water system planning would have no impact on community water fluoridation. This assumption is based on information from key informants representing water systems. Therefore, the pathway to health impacts could not be completed.

Pathway 2: Customer notification

- **Informed assumption** that requiring Group A Water Systems serving 5,000 or more people per day to seek public health information and notify customers 90 days prior to a vote or decision to discontinue community water fluoridation would result in water systems taking these actions before discontinuing community water fluoridation. This assumption is based on information from key informants representing water systems.
- **Unclear evidence** how seeking public health information and notifying customers 90 days prior to a vote or decision to discontinue community water fluoridation would impact a water system's decision to discontinue or continue fluoridation due to variations in water system governance and political and community contexts. Therefore, the pathway to health impacts could not be completed.

FULL REVIEW

For review methods, logic model, strength-of-evidence analyses, and citations of empirical evidence refer to the full Health Impact Review at

<https://sboh.wa.gov/Portals/7/Doc/HealthImpactReviews/HIR-2022-04-HB1684.pdf>

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