



133 Molesworth Street
PO Box 5013
Wellington 6140
New Zealand
T+64 4 496 2000

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Paul Morris
Chief Executive
Grey District Council
Paul.morris@greydc.govt.nz

Tēnā koe Mr Morris

Community water fluoridation

Thank you for providing information earlier this year on the status of the fluoridation infrastructure in your area and the estimated costs and timeframes that would be necessary to fluoridate your drinking water supplies.

Since the Director-General of Health (the DG) wrote to you in June 2022, the DG has issued directions to 14 local authorities to fluoridate some or all of their drinking water supplies. On 3 November 2022, I wrote to a second set of 27 local authorities advising each that I am now actively considering whether to issue it a direction to fluoridate some or all of its drinking water supplies. I have chosen to prioritise consideration of these local authorities based on the needs and size of the populations served by their water supplies.

Drinking water supplies in your local authority area have not been included in this current set. However, it is likely that you will hear from me in the second quarter of 2023, when I expect to begin active consideration of whether to issue a direction to you to fluoridate some or all of your drinking-water supplies. At that time, I will seek written comment from you on the estimated costs of fluoridation, and the date by which you could comply with a direction to fluoridate. I will also consider the scientific evidence on the effectiveness of fluoridation and, for each drinking water supply, whether the benefits of fluoridation outweigh the financial cost, taking into account the oral health status, population size, and estimated costs of fluoridation.

I continue to be mindful of current service delivery pressures across the water services and broader local government sectors. In light of this, if I do issue directions regarding your drinking water supplies, they will have compliance dates set for after July 2024 when the new water service entities are due to be established.



I would also like to remind you that you do not need to wait for a direction from me to start fluoridating drinking water in your area. Community water fluoridation is widely recognised by national and international expert bodies to improve public health by substantially reducing rates of preventable tooth decay.

Nāku noa, nā



Dr Diana Sarfati
Te Tumu Whakarae mō te Hauora
Director-General of Health