



# FLUORIDE

## What is fluoride?

Fluoride has the symbol "F-" and can naturally occur in groundwater sources through the erosion and weathering of soils, rocks and minerals that naturally contain fluoride. Fluoride will have no effect on the colour, taste or smell of the water.

## What is the guideline for fluoride ?

The maximum acceptable concentration of fluoride in drinking water is 1.5 milligrams per litre (mg/L).

Fluoride can only be detected through chemical testing.

## Removing fluoride from drinking water

Fluoride cannot be removed from water through boiling, chlorination, or pitcher-style filtration units.

Effective treatment methods include:

- distillation
- reverse osmosis

Look for devices that have been certified as meeting the appropriate NSF International (NSF)/American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standards for the removal of fluoride (F-).

There are no public water supplies in Newfoundland and Labrador that fluoridate drinking water.

## What are the effects of fluoride in drinking water?

Although fluoride can reduce the risk of dental cavities, exposure to higher concentrations can have adverse health effects.

Children who are exposed to fluoride concentrations greater than 1.5 mg/L, while their adult teeth are developing, may show signs of dental fluorosis. Fluorosis can cause discolouration of teeth, white spots, and pitting or mottling of the tooth enamel.

Exposure to high concentrations of naturally occurring fluoride over a long period of time can result in skeletal fluorosis. Although rare, this condition may cause bones and joints to harden, which can lead to chronic joint pain, restriction of mobility, and increased risk of bone fractures.

## Where can I find out more?

To find out more, please visit Environment and Climate Change's website at [www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/water](http://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/water).

You can also contact an Environmental Health Officer or Program Manager at the nearest Government Service Centre, NL Health Services, or a water resources official with ECC.

 (709) 729-2563       [water@gov.nl.ca](mailto:water@gov.nl.ca)

 <https://www.gov.nl.ca/ecc/waterres/quality/drinkingwater/>

