



National Association of County & City Health Officials

*The National Connection for Local Public Health*

## **For Immediate Release**

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## **National Association of County and City Health Officials Announces Awards to Support Fluoridation in Local Communities**

— Grants Awarded in Kentucky, Louisiana, North Carolina, Washington, and West Virginia through Pilot Project —

**Washington, DC, March 29, 2017**—The [National Association of County and City Health Officials](#) (NACCHO), with support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has awarded grants to six entities to support community water fluoridation.

Dental cavities are a common chronic disease among American children; one in four children living below the federal poverty level experience untreated cavities. Water fluoridation prevents cavities by providing frequent and consistent contact with low levels of fluoride, ultimately reducing cavities by about 25% in children and adults.

“Science has demonstrated the effectiveness and benefits of water fluoridation on oral health,” said NACCHO’s Interim Executive Director and Chief Program Officer William M. Barnes, PhD, MBA. “NACCHO and the CDC are collaborating to help communities maintain their support for water fluoridation, especially in rural and low-income areas. We are committed to reducing health disparities and improving the quality of life for everyone.”

In January 2017, NACCHO, in partnership with the CDC, announced the project “Building Capacity for Oral Health: Fluoridation Equipment in Local Communities,” designed to support communities to either replace aging water fluoridation equipment or install new equipment for community water fluoridation. This one-time funding opportunity also helped to identify the need for assistance to support core infrastructure and inform future opportunities for similar projects.

While these community water systems work to diligently maintain their equipment, aging equipment poses a challenge after many years of use, particularly for small systems where resources are scarce. NACCHO received 27 grant applications from 13 states. A total of \$125,000 was awarded to the following six grantees:

- Bowling Green Municipal Utilities, KY (pop. 125,000)
- City of Fircrest, WA (pop. 6,500)
- City of Kannapolis, NC (pop. 53,100)
- Jefferson Parish Water Department East Bank, LA (pop. 243,782)
- Versailles Municipal Utility, KY (pop. 6,200)
- West Virginia Oral Health Coalition, WV (pop. 1,634)

Water fluoridation is one of the most practical, cost-effective, equitable, and safe measures to improve a community’s oral health. NACCHO is pleased to have the opportunity to provide these communities with the infrastructure support that will aid them in maintaining effective water fluoridation for the communities they serve.

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#### **ABOUT NACCHO**

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) represents the nation's nearly 3,000 local governmental health departments. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work every day to protect and promote health and well-being for all people in their communities. For more information about NACCHO, please visit [www.naccho.org](http://www.naccho.org).