



"RE-BUILDING THE CITY'S WATER SYSTEMS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY"

Sewerage & Water Board OF NEW ORLEANS

C. RAY NAGIN, *President*
TOMMIE A. VASSEL, *President Pro-Tem*

625 ST. JOSEPH STREET
NEW ORLEANS, LA 70165 • 504-529-2837 OR 52W-ATER
www.swbnola.org

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To: News Media
From: Sewerage & Water Board
Re: Fluoride
Contact: Robert Jackson, 269-7978, or Brenda Thornton, 269-7819
Release: Immediately

S&WB Has Resumed Adding Fluoride To Drinking Water

The Sewerage & Water Board of New Orleans has resumed adding fluoride to the City's drinking water supply. Both the East Bank and Algiers Water Treatment Plants of Orleans Parish began adding fluoride to the treatment process on Wednesday, Aug 1, 2007..

The Board was not able to continue the use of fluoride after Katrina because it was not able to purchase the chemical used. For several years there has been a national shortage of fluoride and all of the Board's historical sources for this commodity could not provide the product in the quantities needed.

Dental and medical studies have consistently shown that the addition of fluoride at recommended levels contributes greatly to the dental health of a population and it has been the policy of the Board to perform this treatment since June of 1974, when fluoride addition began in Orleans Parish.

Water plant and laboratory personnel continuously adjust and measure the levels of fluoride added to the water to ensure that the level remains in the beneficial, recommended range of 0.7 to 1.0 parts per million (ppm) in the finished water.

Katrina did not damage the storage tanks, the feeding equipment or the piping associated with the fluoride system at either of its water plants. The problem was that with Katrina's interruption to S&WB water system operations, the Board's supplier dedicated its supply of fluoride to other customers.

As it became apparent following Katrina that the supplier for fluoride under an existing contract was not able to fill the Board's needs, an attempt was made in October of 2006 to attract a new supplier by issuing a request through the normal bid process. Upon opening the responses on December 16, 2006, there were no companies offering to sell fluoride to the Board.

A supplier has now been found and fluoride will once again be part of the treatment process. It should be noted that the current agreement with the supplier is on a shipment-to-shipment basis, based upon availability on the spot market. It is possible that the Board could again experience periods without fluoride until an annual contract can be entered into. If this occurs, the public will be notified.

The Board's recent purchase of 3,908 gallons of fluoride cost \$9,673. The pre-Katrina cost for the same volume was \$2,693.