



## Adding Fluoride to the Lethbridge Tap Water

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February 28, 2014

Faron Ellis PhD

Marda Schindeler MA

Citizen Society Research Lab

Lethbridge College

3000 College Drive South

Lethbridge AB T1K 1L6







[faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ca](mailto:faron.ellis@lethbridgecollege.ca)

[marda.schindeler@lethbridgecollege.ca](mailto:marda.schindeler@lethbridgecollege.ca)

[www.lethbridgecollege.ca/go/csrl](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ca/go/csrl)



## Methodology

-  **Population** The city of Lethbridge has a total population of 90,417 residents (2013 census) approximately 80% of which are 18 years of age or older (72,330). A total of 43,011 Lethbridge residents are male (48.9%) while 44,871 are female (51.1%). South Lethbridge is home to 30,655 residents (33.9%) while the rapidly expanding west side is now home to 33,988 residents (37.6%). There are 25,774 north Lethbridge residents (28.5%). Coaldale has a total population of 7,493 residents (2011 census).
-  **Sample Data** Collected by Lethbridge College students enrolled in a variety of social science courses in the winter of 2014. Students interviewed 607 randomly selected, adult Lethbridge and Coaldale residents by telephone on February 8–9, 2014 under the supervision of School of Liberal Arts faculty members Faron Ellis and Marda Schindeler. We sincerely appreciate and thank all those who took time to respond to our survey. Full methodological notes for samples from previous Lethbridge and Alberta Public Opinion Studies can be obtained by visiting the CSRL web pages at: [www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl](http://www.lethbridgecollege.ab.ca/go/csrl).
-  **Representativeness** Analysis of the demographic data indicates that, within acceptable limits, the sample accurately represents the demographic distribution of the adult population within the city of Lethbridge. The sample has been statistically weighted to even better reflect that of the population (sex, age, and area of the city of Lethbridge).
-  **Confidence** The weighted sample yields a margin of error of  $\pm 4.0$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20. The margin of error increases when analyzing sub-samples of the data. For example, the Lethbridge subsample margin of error is  $\pm 4.2$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, while the Coaldale subsample has a margin of error of  $\pm 11.2$  percentage points 19 times out of 20.
-  **IB Commons Call Centre** Students conducted interviews using the facilities of the Lethbridge College IB Commons Call Centre.
-  **Sponsorship** These data are part of a larger study of the opinions and attitudes of Lethbridge residents conducted by the Citizen Society Research Lab at Lethbridge College. This particular question arose out of College student and faculty research interests in the topic.

## Adding Fluoride to the Lethbridge Tap Water

A majority of Lethbridge residents (53.1%) want to continue to add fluoride to the Lethbridge tap water. Approximately one-third of residents (33.6%) want to discontinue the fluoridation process. A further 13.3% are undecided.

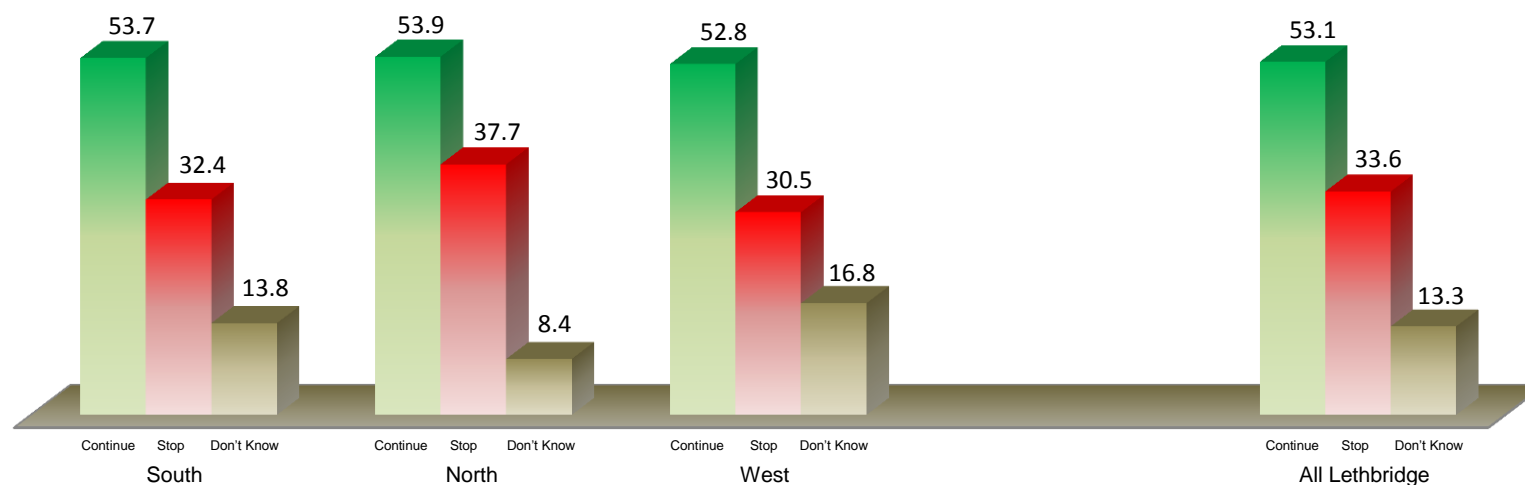
The most recent data portend well for the pro-fluoridation side of the debate. When compared with results from 2011, the anti-fluoridation side appears to be losing the protracted battle for public support which it initiated.

For example, in 2011 the gap between support (48.7%) and opposition (42.6%) was 6.1%. That gap has increased to nearly 20% in 2014.

Adding Fluoride to the Lethbridge Tap Water	2011	2014
Continue to add fluoride	48.7	53.1
Stop adding fluoride	42.6	33.6
Undecided	8.7	13.3

Few significant opinion differences exist between demographic groups within the overall population. For example, opinion levels are relatively consistent across all areas of the city, no significant gender differences are evident, nor does this issue illicit markedly different opinion from supporters of the various provincial political parties.

However, upper income residents (61.9%), university graduates (62.7%) and seniors (67.0%) are somewhat more supportive of continuing fluoridation than are lower income, less well educated, and younger residents.



Fluoridation (%)	South	North	West	All Lethbridge
Continue Fluoridation	53.7	53.9	52.8	53.1
Stop Fluoridation	32.4	37.7	30.5	33.6
Don't know-Unsure	13.8	8.4	16.8	13.3

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

## Adding Fluoride to the Lethbridge Tap Water (%) (February 2014)

Area	South	North	West	Lethbridge
Continue Fluoridation	53.7	53.9	52.8	53.1
Stop Fluoridation	32.4	37.7	30.5	33.6
Don't know-Unsure	13.8	8.4	16.8	13.3

Gender	Male	Female
Continue Fluoridation	55.4	51.1
Stop Fluoridation	29.7	37.2
Don't know-Unsure	14.9	11.7

Household Income*	Under \$40,000	\$40-100,000	Over \$100,000
Continue Fluoridation	47.4	54.5	61.9
Stop Fluoridation	35.8	34.8	25.4
Don't know-Unsure	16.8	10.6	12.7

Religious Participation	2-3 per month/more	Several per year	Rarely/never
Continue Fluoridation	59.2	49.6	53.6
Stop Fluoridation	26.9	37.4	32.6
Don't know-Unsure	13.8	13.0	13.7

Education*	High School or less	Some Post-secondary	College-Tech-Trade	University Grad
Continue Fluoridation	51.3	38.8	58.3	62.7
Stop Fluoridation	37.0	46.3	29.9	22.5
Don't know-Unsure	11.8	14.9	11.8	14.8

Age*	18-29	30-44	45-64	65 and older
Continue Fluoridation	46.4	50.9	53.0	67.0
Stop Fluoridation	33.3	34.8	36.6	27.0
Don't know-Unsure	20.2	14.3	10.4	6.0

Provincial Vote	PC	Wildrose	Liberal	NDP	Undecided
Continue Fluoridation	55.9	53.7	59.2	61.6	40.2
Stop Fluoridation	27.0	32.6	33.7	25.6	40.2
Don't know-Unsure	17.1	13.7	7.1	12.8	19.5

Notes: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%; \* sig < 0.05

## Demographics

Gender (%)		Area of City (%)		Income (%)		Education (%)		Age (%)	
Male	49.8	South	33.7	Under \$40,000	29.9	H-School/less	21.8	18-29	29.6
Female	50.2	North	28.9	\$40-100,000	43.9	Some P-Sec.	24.7	30-44	22.3
		West	37.5	Over \$100,000	26.2	Col-Tech-Grad	27.8	45-64	30.2
						University Grad	25.7	65 or older	17.9

### Church Attendance (%)

2-3/month +	27.9
Several/year	23.4
Rarely/never	48.8

Note: Due to rounding, proportions may not total exactly 100%

## Question

The City of Lethbridge adds fluoride to the tap water it provides Lethbridge, Coaldale and other southern Alberta communities. Please tell me if you think the City of Lethbridge should continue adding fluoride, or stop adding fluoride to the tap water.

- Continue fluoridation
- Stop fluoridation
- (Don't know – Unsure)