

# Developing Partnerships to Build, Develop, and Sustain State Oral Health Programs

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## BACKGROUND

Relationship building can impact community members' overall health. In North Dakota (ND), 96.5% of the total state population is served by fluoridated community water systems. Community water fluoridation (CWF) is managed by the ND Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), separate from the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) ND Oral Health Program (OHP).

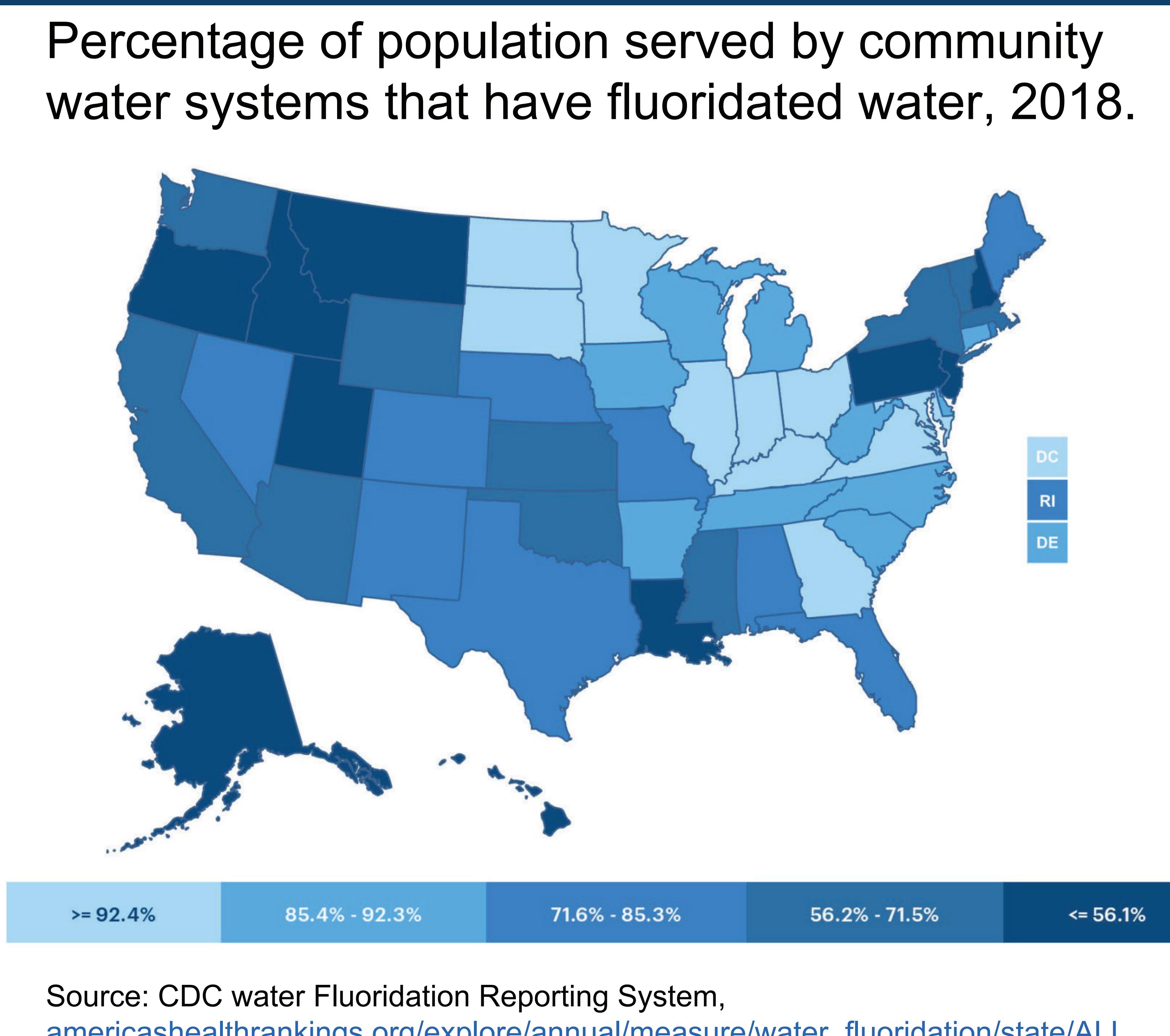
The ND OHP identified water operators were unaware of fluoridation work, the benefits of CWF, and how to appropriately sample and measure fluoride. The ND OHP established partnerships with the ND DEQ, the American Fluoridation Society, and local providers to ensure collaboration, consistency, and promotion of safe drinking water.

## METHODS

The ND OHP collaborated with several stakeholders to ensure ND residents were receiving optimally fluoridated drinking water. They also worked to ensure medical and dental providers as well as community members were educated on the importance of drinking tap water.



# Building lasting relationships with community, state, and national partners is imperative to ensuring optimally fluoridated community water systems.



Scan the QR code to learn more about crucial partnerships and effective education materials for providers and community.

## RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

In four years, the ND OHP established lasting partnerships with local stakeholders, agencies, associations, and national partners. These relationships allowed the ND OHP to survey and interview water operators and leaders to assess CWF equipment and training needs. Results of the survey were utilized to direct future education, develop and disseminate resources, and propose new equipment purchasing. Partnerships that have been established are ensuring ND communities not only have access to optimally fluoridated tap water, but community members understand the importance of drinking tap water.



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