

Dallas Voters Back Fluoride By 2½-1 Edge

38,029 Brave Bitter Cold, Cast Ballots

By GENE ORMSBY

A surprising 38,029 persons braved bitter cold and voted 2½ to 1 in favor of fluoridation Saturday.

The vote was 27,089 against to 10,940 for an ordinance that would have outlawed adding fluoride to the city's water supply.

The turnout exceeded predictions that some 35,000 residents would vote if the weather was good. That still would have been one of the largest turnouts for a single-issue referendum in Dallas' history.

Pro-fluoridation spokesmen lauded the outcome as a strong public endorsement of the City Council's original decision to fluoridate the city's water supply.

They noted that Dallas is the first city of more than 500,000 to win a fluoridation referendum the first time.

DALLAS MAYOR ERIK JONSSON said he had two reactions:

"First, this is a clear-cut enough decision that hopefully we can proceed with this and get it into being in the shortest possible time, probably sometime between three to five months."

He said getting the city water fluoridated was "mostly a matter of ordering

Fluoridated water expected
by May, Page 11A.

materials and equipment and getting it in here."

Secondly, he added, "It is simply marvelous so many people got out to the polls under such adverse conditions. I didn't even hope for so many. The people of Dallas have demonstrated that when something so important is at stake, they will get out and do what they should and must. It would be difficult to duplicate this showing in any city."

"THIS CONFIRMS the fact the council basically made the decision (for fluoridation) which the public wanted them to do and expected them to do. I'm just tired and happy."

Local medical and dental societies, joined by city officials, labor unions, business and civic leaders, supported the Dal-

las Citizens Committee for Fluoridation.

DeWayne Dallas, spokesman for the anti-fluoridation group, the Greater Dallas Association for Pure Water, said he did not plan to challenge the election's outcome.

"I think the people had the right to vote, and they voted," he said. He said he planned no new petitions.

He indicated surprise at the size of the margin of defeat.

Voting got off to a particularly slow start Saturday morning, when temperatures were just starting to climb up from a low of 11 degrees.

But by midafternoon when the thermometer reached 20 degrees the turnout picked up noticeably.

The Dallas water department was given the go-ahead on fluoridation last August, but the City Council was forced to set a referendum after a successful petition campaign opposing fluoridation.

Voters balloted for the proposed ordinance if they were against fluoridation, or against the ordinance if they favored fluoridation.

The ordinance was written so that it might also prevent the city from placing any chemical in the water to soften it or prevent pipes and heaters from corroding.