

PFAS is a hot topic not only as it relates to municipal drinking water supplies, but also as it relates to public health. When communicating with the public on PFAS-related announcements, updates, and concerns, careful strategies must be employed in order to assure effective message communication and establish trust. The following points are guidelines for water utilities/purveyors on communicating about PFAS.



COMMUNICATE EARLY & OFTEN
SHARE COMPASSIONATELY & CONFIDENTLY
PRIORITIZE TRANSPARENCY & TRUST

SPEAKING TO THE PUBLIC

- Provide clear and consistent messaging
 - Be the first to tell your story to ratepayers and residents
- Effectively share your position, build trust, and grow relationships through in-person meetings
- Share plans and updates to the extent possible, especially if service or construction disruptions are anticipated
 - Develop fact sheets and distribute to everyone in your organization in order to share the same story
 - Allow multiple personnel at your organization to share and answer questions
 - Highlight the source of pollution, particularly that it is not from the utility

COMMUNICATING WITH REPORTERS, LEGISLATORS, AND COMMUNITY GROUPS

- Work to establish positive relationships
- When interacting with the press:
 - Turn them into allies
 - Be readily available and responsive to answer their questions
 - Aim to contact them before they contact you (or don't contact you), whether the story is good or bad

DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

- Stick with a consistent newsletter distribution schedule (i.e., monthly, quarterly)
- Determine a target reading level, accessibility options (i.e., language translations), and preferred communication method of your audience (i.e., email, social media)
- Add a PFAS page to your website for background information and updates

BRINGING IN THE EXPERTS

- Consider adding credibility to your messaging as a utility by hosting a third-party panel or providing contact information for subject matter experts (i.e. toxicologists, biologists, chemists, regulatory officials)
- Consider utilizing a professional communications specialist to assist with creating clear and effective communications



Link to EEL
PFAS Resources
Webpage

For more information, please contact
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