



# PFAS and Best Practices in Risk Communication



Water Reuse Communications Collaborative Group



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## Agenda

- Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC) Risk Communication Toolkit
- Water Research Foundation PFAS Risk Communication Messaging for Water Sector Professionals resources
- Community PFAS Cycle Example
- Water Reuse PFAS Risk Communication Considerations

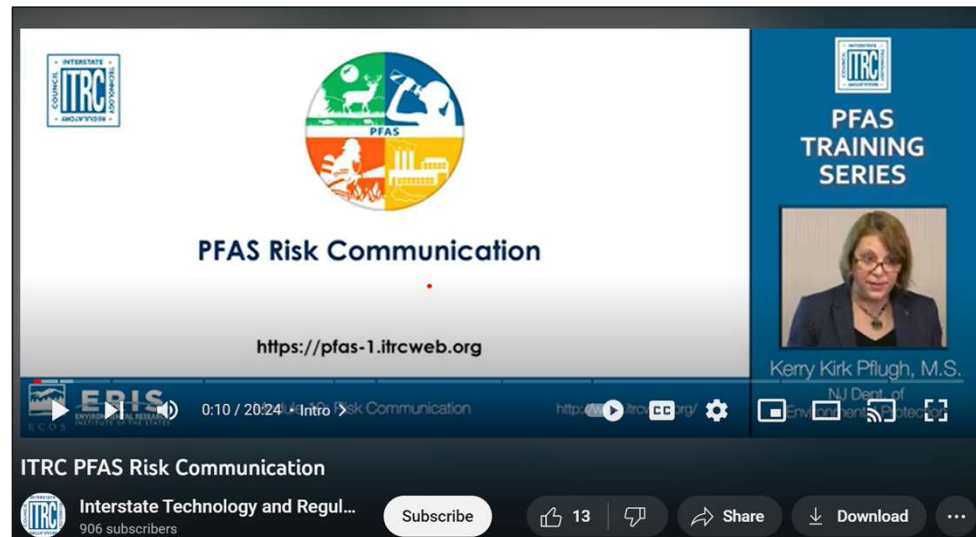
## Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council (ITRC)

- ITRC is a state-led coalition working to advance the use of innovative environmental technologies and approaches. ITRC's work translates good science into better decision making.
- Since 1995, ITRC has grown into a national organization representing 50 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico.



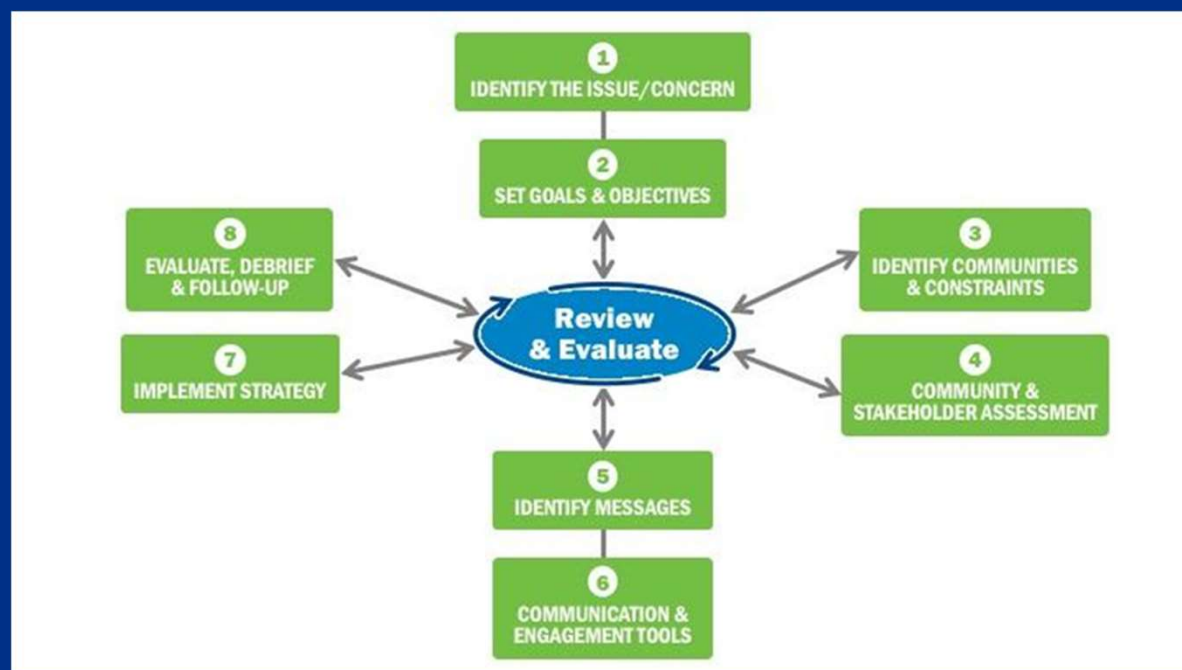
## ITRC PFAS Resources

- Dedicated risk communication chapter in ITRC PFAS Technical and Regulatory Guidance
- In-person and online training modules
- “Living” compilation of state and federal standards

A screenshot of a YouTube video player. The video title is "ITRC PFAS Risk Communication". The video content shows a presentation slide with the ITRC logo in the top left, a central circular graphic with "PFAS" text, and the text "PFAS Risk Communication" and the URL "https://pfas-1.itrcweb.org". A small inset video in the top right shows a woman, identified as Kerry Kirk Pflugh, M.S., with the text "PFAS TRAINING SERIES" above her. The video player interface includes a progress bar at 0:10 / 20:24, a play button, and a volume icon. Below the video, the channel name "ITRC PFAS Risk Communication" is displayed, along with the channel logo, the name "Interstate Technology and Regul...", and "906 subscribers". There is a "Subscribe" button, a like button with "13" likes, a comment icon, a share icon, and a download icon.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqOaPip-z5g>

# Risk Communication Plan Process Diagram



**RCT-1, Figure 4-1, Communication Plan Description**

Source: Modified from NJDEP 2014  
 Based on work of Chess, Hance and Sandman,  
 Rutgers University

- Facilitates development of project-specific plans
- Risk Communication Toolkit
  - Appendix A: template to download and complete
  - Section 4: process steps description
  - Section 5: case studies
  - Section 6: appendices of tools and examples
  - Additional case studies and tools to be linked as developed by other ITRC issue teams



# ITRC Risk Communication Toolkit Resources

## Steps 1 & 2 Identify the Issue & Set Goals

- Agenda for First Internal Communication Team Planning Meeting
- PFAS-specific SMART Goals

## Steps 3 & 4 Audience Assessment

- Actor Mapping Tools, including PFAS-specific examples

## Steps 5 Identify Messages

- Message Mapping Guide
- PFAS-specific Key Messages

## Step 6 Communication Methods

- Case Studies
- Active Centralized Information Repositories
- Community Education Classes
- Guidance for Writing Analytical Results Summary Letters
- Guidance for Writing Press Releases
- Social Factors Vision Board
- Analytical Data Package Public Information Fact Sheet
- Tracking Form of Media Correspondence



# WRF 5124 Background and Project Overview



## *PFAS Risk Communication Messaging for Water Sector Professionals (WRF 5124)*

### **Background:**

- U.S.EPA included 29 PFAS in the 5th Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule.
- UCMR5 will occur when information on health risks is still being accrued and evaluated.

### **Project Sponsors:**

This project is co-funded by The Water Research Foundation (WRF) and the American Water Works Association (AWWA) as part of WRF's Research Priority Program.



## WRF 5124 Project Objectives



### **Develop informational products and tools to:**

- promote effective communications between water and wastewater utilities and their customers based on established risk communication practices and guidance,
- develop ready-to-use materials to support drinking water utilities with positive observations of PFAS from the fifth Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring Rule (UCMR5) sampling, and
- provide ready-to-use educational materials, based on known science, for the public regarding the risks of PFAS in water sources, tap water, biosolids applications, and treatment process residuals.



# WRF 5124 Mission and Deliverables

## *PFAS Risk Communication Messaging for Water Sector Professionals (WRF 5124)*

**MISSION:** Promote effective communications between water and wastewater utilities and their customers through development of messaging maps and innovative materials targeting relevant stakeholders and audiences.

### **UCMR5 Toolkit**

Develop communication materials to support *drinking water utilities* with positive observations of PFAS from UCMR5.

### **One Water Toolkit**

Better inform stakeholders to have actual perception of risk, sense of agency, and acceptance of action being taken by utilities to mitigate that risk.





# WRF One Water Toolkit



PFAS Cycle Brochures

PFAS Product  
Information and  
Certification Resources

One Water PFAS Web  
Content

One Water  
Letter/Email to  
Customers

One Water Bill Inserts

One Water Social  
Media Inserts

<https://www.waterrf.org/resource/one-water-toolkit>

# PFAS Product Information and Certification Resources

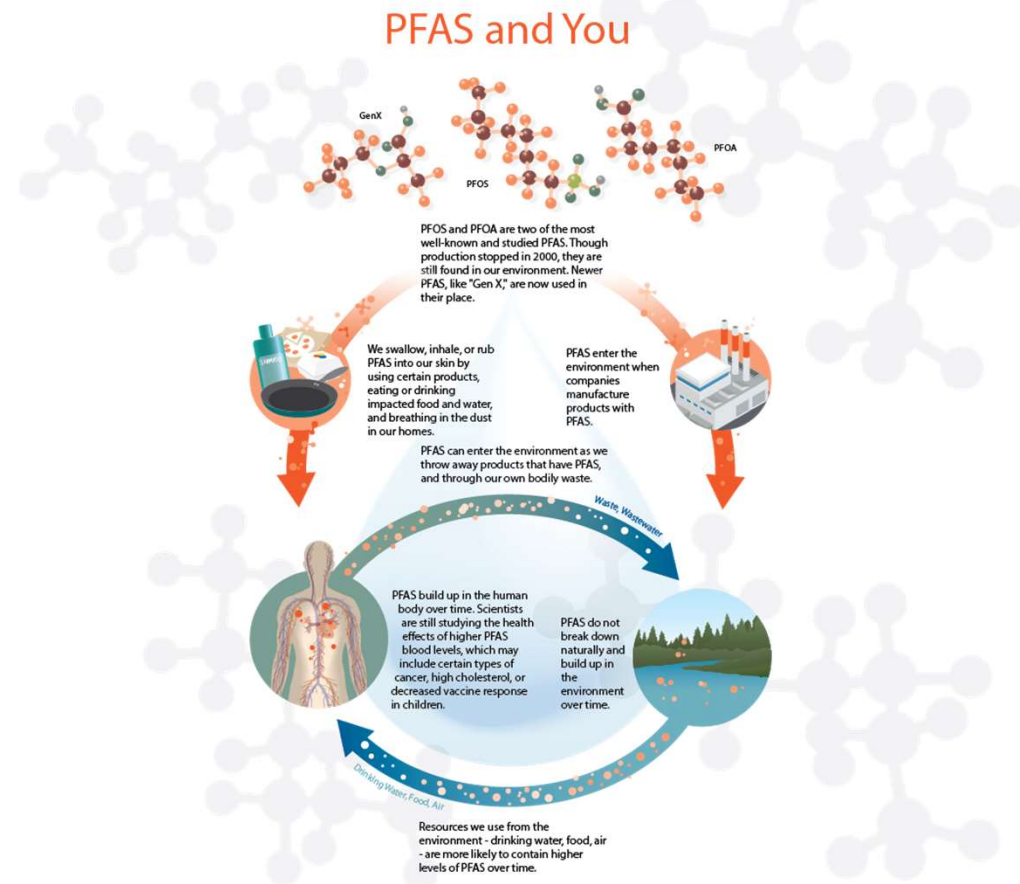
Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) Product Information and Certification Resources					
Resource/Institution and Focus	Details	Criteria	Considerations	Additional Notes	Associated Links
<b>GreenScreen Certification</b> <i>Industrial and Consumer Products</i>	Certification for products that are safer alternatives in terms of chemicals for the following product areas: firefighting foam, textile chemicals, furniture and fabrics, cleaners and degreasers in manufacturing, and food service ware.	Certification standard promotes use of PFAS-free and preferred chemicals. Rates products according to four levels based on hazard assessment: bronze, silver, gold, and platinum. Consumers can search for companies, products, or product types in their online database.	Independent certification; does not tolerate PFAS as well as other concerning chemicals in products. Some of the chemical assessments on their registry require a fee for viewing.	The GreenScreen Assessment Registry also allows consumers to search for chemicals using a Chemical Abstracts Service Registry Number (CASRN) for GreenScreen assessments.	<a href="https://www.greenscreenchemicals.org/certified">https://www.greenscreenchemicals.org/certified</a> <a href="https://registry.greenscreenchemicals.org/">https://registry.greenscreenchemicals.org/</a>
<b>ChemSec</b> <i>Industrial and Retail</i>	Not geared towards consumers, but consumers can use it as a resource for learning more about chemicals in the products they use.	List of hazardous chemicals used in consumer products titled "Substitute it now (SIN) List" - may be used by retailers, chemical producers, suppliers, manufacturers to identify chemicals that should be substituted in manufacturing and products. Their marketplace lists companies that provide product alternatives free from PFAS.	There is a page on their site that discusses fluorinated compounds and identified alternative approaches for finding products that are free from these compounds.		<a href="https://sinsearch.chemsec.org/search/searchall">https://sinsearch.chemsec.org/search/searchall</a> <a href="https://sinlist.chemsec.org/chemical-groups/fluorinated-compounds/">https://sinlist.chemsec.org/chemical-groups/fluorinated-compounds/</a> <a href="https://marketplace.chemsec.org/alternatives?groups=10">https://marketplace.chemsec.org/alternatives?groups=10</a>
<b>Coordination between the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), Fashion Forward, and U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG)</b> <i>Consumer Products: Apparel</i>	Published a report on PFAS in the apparel industry, which includes guidance for consumers on navigating labels and evaluating whether a product may or may not contain PFAS. Fashion Forward Provides a products page for children's clothing, with product details and certifications clearly stated.	Retailer "report cards" indicate how well major brands are doing at reducing harmful chemicals in their products. Coordinated report was released to guide consumers through evaluating PFAS in their products and understanding PFAS product labels. See report for all criteria details.			Download report posted on this page: <a href="https://www.fashionfwd.org/">https://www.fashionfwd.org/</a> <a href="https://www.fashionfwd.org/shop-kids-clothes">https://www.fashionfwd.org/shop-kids-clothes</a> <a href="https://www.nrdc.org/resources/going-out-fashion-us-apparel-manufacturers-must-eliminate-pfas-from-their-supply-chains">https://www.nrdc.org/resources/going-out-fashion-us-apparel-manufacturers-must-eliminate-pfas-from-their-supply-chains</a>
<b>Cradle to Cradle</b> <i>Consumer Products</i>	Type of product certification that encourages manufacturers to reduce use of "banned chemicals"; product types include adhesives, carpets, flooring, wallboard, furniture,	To be certified, any "banned" chemicals must not exceed an intentional input greater than 1000 ppm. PFAS is prohibited in products certified at all levels. If PFAS is present in	Third party product certification program utilized during the certification process; "Banned" list includes PFOS and PFOA;	There is also an online platform to view products registered with a cradle to cradle certification, as well as their level of	<a href="https://www.c2ccertified.org/get-certified/product-certification">https://www.c2ccertified.org/get-certified/product-certification</a>

<https://www.waterrf.org/resource/one-water-toolkit>

## PFAS Cycles Infographic

- Educate customers, general public and other stakeholders on PFAS movement in the environment and people
- Foundation for creating a community-specific PFAS cycle

<https://www.waterrf.org/resource/one-water-toolkit>



# Example Community PFAS Cycle

<https://www.nantucket-ma.gov/DocumentCenter/View/38755/Town-PFAS-Assessment-Report-Factsheet-PDF>

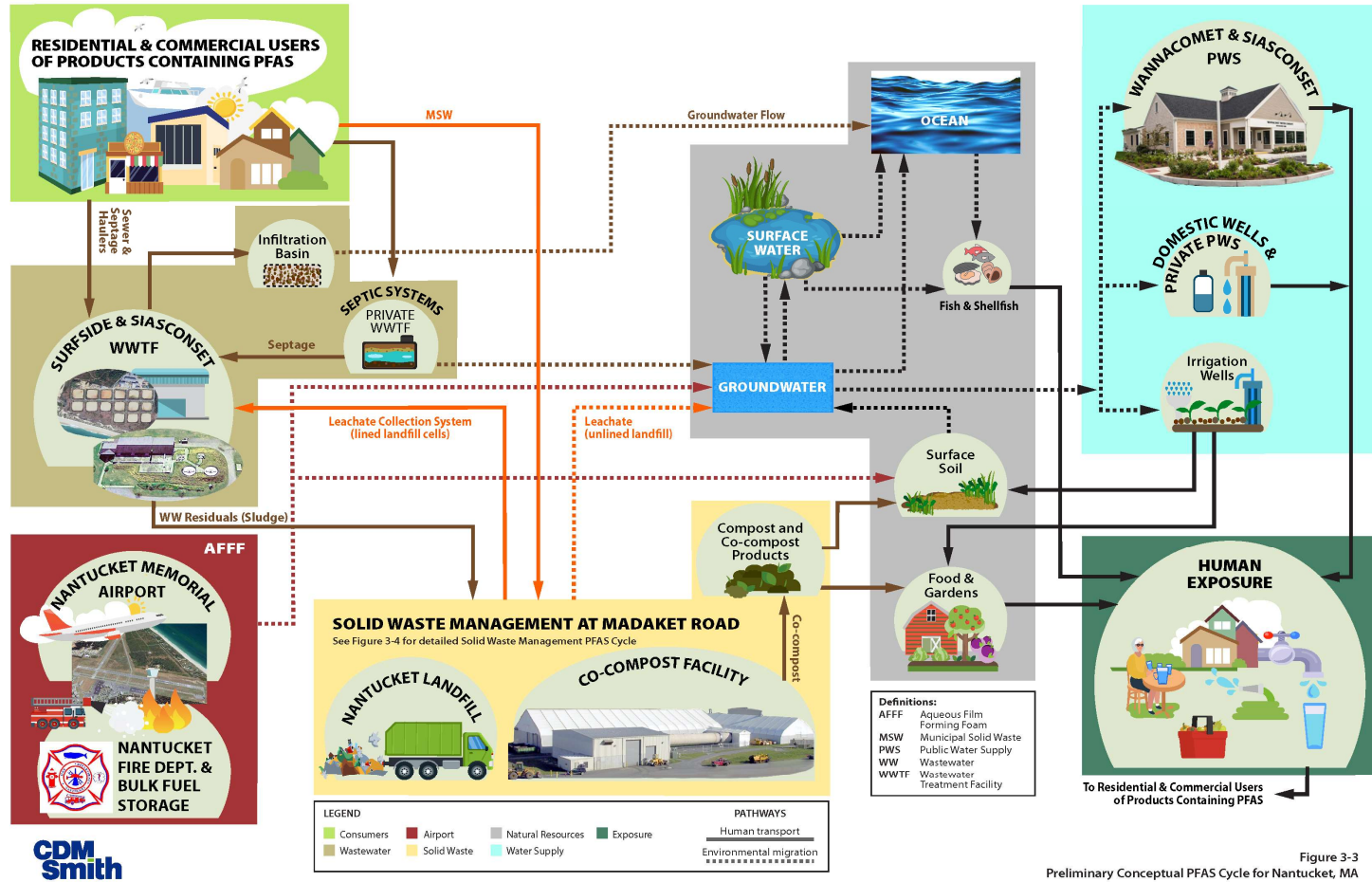


Figure 3-3 Preliminary Conceptual PFAS Cycle for Nantucket, MA





## Water Reuse Risk Communication PFAS Considerations

- Water reuse may be an opportunity to avoid PFAS and other emerging contaminants
- On the flip side, any water source (including reused water) should be tested and treated, as applicable
- State regulatory agencies have identified PFAS in bottled water, as it is not regulated by the drinking water act
- Water reuse helps maintain a healthy community “water” cycle
- Sustainability metrics can help communicate water reuse benefits
  - Environmental and watershed stewardship
  - Value of water (such as natural capital co-benefit transfer)
    - Considers water source and future availability



# listen. think. deliver.

Risk Communication Resources: PFAS Focus

