



CEET

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY

Penn SRP Center

Panel Discussion: What does a Successful Risk Communication Strategy for PFAS Sites Look Like?.

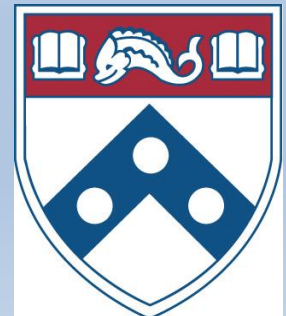
2019 Bioremediation Symposium, Baltimore, MD

Incorporating The Community into Risk Communication

Edward A Emmett

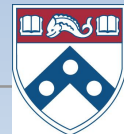
**Professor in Occupational and Environmental Medicine,
Director Community Engagement Core, Superfund Research
& Training Program**

**Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania,
Philadelphia, PA**



PFOA Contamination: Little Hocking Water Association, Ohio.

- ◆ **Water Intake across Ohio River from DuPont Teflon Production Facility**
- ◆ **PFOA detected in water**
- ◆ **Community-Based NIH funded study of stratified sample of residents found:**
 - **High serum PFOA in residents (~80x US medians)**
 - **Source of PFOA is drinking water**
 - **No detectable short-term health effects**



CEET

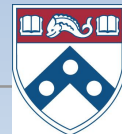


Penn SRP Center

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY

Community-Based Study

- ◆ **Studied by Research Partnership**
 - Environmental Health Researcher
 - Local Physician
 - Community association
- ◆ **Communication throughout Study Period**
- ◆ **“Community-First” Communication of Results and Risks**
 - Process developed with community **in advance** of results being available by **Community Advisory Committee**



CEET

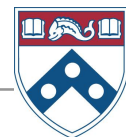


Penn SRP Center

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY

Little Hocking Community: General Principles for Communication of Results

- ◆ **Study participants should receive results first; avoid first learning results from press, neighbors or friends.**
- ◆ **Inform press in timely way, investigators control the message as possible.**
- ◆ **Results released promptly, once investigators comfortable.**
- ◆ **Study must remain a credible given various stakeholders**
- ◆ **Communications should maximize constructive responses to findings**
- ◆ **Communications should minimize pointless concern.**
- ◆ **Questions from individuals answered promptly**



CEET

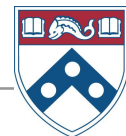


Penn SRP Center

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY

Communities' Priority for Communication of Results

1. Study Participants
2. The community i.e. residents of the water district
3. Community Advisory Committee
4. Relevant authorities and representatives
5. Local medical providers
6. Local media
7. National media
8. Scientific community



CEET



Penn SRP Center

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY

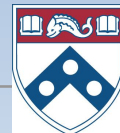
Success of Little Hocking Communications

◆ Recommendations Included:

- Use bottled water
- Institute treatment of water, reduce PFOA emission, consult personal physicians re individual medical issues (we could advise physicians).

◆ Adoption of Recommendations (from follow-up study):

- 95% changed Water Source
- Most but not all adopted bottled water recommendations
- Blood PFOA levels reduced substantially
- All parties took prudent actions as a result of information
- Pleasure that communication preferences respected



CEET



CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY

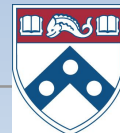
Lessons From Other Studies

◆ GM/UAW Risk Communication of Research

- Responsible parties all endorse communications
- What is the employee/manager to do?
- What is the company going to do?
- Present results and recommendations/responses simultaneously!
- Make information available to the individual's doctor

◆ Asbestos Exposure in Ambler PA

- Great range of risk perception even in the same family
- Risks vary among individuals
- Expect different responses to risk, try to inform them all.



CEET



Penn SRP Center

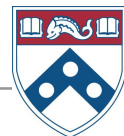
CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY

Risk Communication

**Inform those who need to know,
to help their decision-making?**

OR

Cover your ass?



CEET



Penn SRP Center

CENTER OF EXCELLENCE IN ENVIRONMENTAL TOXICOLOGY