

AAAS EPI Center

Stakeholder Summit on Science in Local Decision Making
on Drinking Water Safety

Has this issue come up in your community?

- Nearly all respondents said water contamination is an issue with which their community, or a neighboring community, has grappled.
- PFAS, including PFOS and GenX, were the mostly commonly mentioned contaminants. Others included heavy metals, microplastics, BPA, PCEs, coal ash, and fertilizer run off.

What questions do you have, or where do you need more information on this topic?

- More information on the toxicity and health risks of different contaminant types.
- How are the standards for acceptable levels of PFAS and other contaminants set? Why are there differences state to state, or between states and the EPA?
- When and how should a community test for potential water contaminants?
- What testing is (or may be) already being done, and by whom? Is that information made publically available? Are there testing best practices?
- More information about treatment options, and how to select the right, cost effective and health protective treatment or management approach for your community.

What barriers limit effective use of scientific information in your decision making?

- Lack of consistency in information and/or the reported science, which limits confidence in the data.
- Lack of availability of the underlying research/studies that inform safety standards.
- The difficulty of assessing relative risk, communicating risk, and taking action based on risk/benefit analyses.
- Lack of information on combination of challenges (i.e., investing in remediation strategies for multiple contaminants).
- The resource intensiveness of obtaining scientific data.
- Overly technical information.