RESPONDING TO AN EMERGING CONTAMINANT IN GREENWICH

COOPERATION

COORDINATION

COMMUNICATION

TRUST

COLLABORATION

STRATEGY

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8/28/2019
CONNECTION TO THE COMMUNITY

Diverse, well educated affluent mid-sized community with population of 62,359 (2016) located in Fairfield County

Full time government and agencies (not all inclusive): Health, Fire, Police, Wetlands/Conservation, Parks and Recreations, EMS by contract

Drinking Water: Aquarion Water Company and approximately 3,000 private wells
STATE STRATEGY

CT DPH Worked With Dept. of Energy And Environmental Protection (DEEP) Remediation on PFAS Strategy

- Identify areas where PFAS may have been released to the environment
- Identify public and private drinking water supplies that may be vulnerable to PFAS contamination
- Developed webpages (DWS and DEEP) and public education
- DPH Developed action level for PFAS (sum of 5 PFAS)
- Developed well water sampling criteria
- Proposed action steps if PFAS identified
PFAS
STATE AND LOCAL COLLABORATION

- NYS Westchester County identifies PFAS contamination in NY in public drinking water wells on NYS/CT border

- DPH and DEEP brief Greenwich Department of Health (GHD) about possible PFAS migration into Greenwich public/private well water supplies
PFAS
STATE AND LOCAL COMMUNICATION

- Direct support, involvement and direction from DPH Commissioner's Office
- Focus on the health of the community
- Communication to public/private well water supply owners
- Agreed upon community outreach forum
PFAS STATE AND LOCAL COOPERATION

• Working with differences between federal and state and local strategies

• Timing of correspondence

• Scheduling well water sample collection

• Initiating press releases

• Communicating with elected officials, boards, community groups, town agencies
ORGANIZED STRATEGY FOR TEAM APPROACH

• Handled all safety and security matters with local police
• Available for media inquiries and local resident questions
• Understands community’s sensitivity due to historic contamination issues
• Awareness of community/political mistrust of Westchester County Airport
ORGANIZED STRATEGY FOR TEAM APPROACH

- Facilitated by the Greenwich Department of Health
- Held in the impacted area
- Attendees were free to circulate
- Opportunity for confidential consultation
- Team presentation at the end of information session
- Team members stayed to answer questions
LESSON LEARNED/RECOMMENDATIONS

- Need to communicate and collaborate to deliver a common message
- State and local agencies need to gain trust of each other
- Local health lead for local communication
- Local health is known and trusted by community residents.
LESSONS LEARNED/RECOMMENDATIONS

• Public information/community outreach sessions should be conducted.

• Guidance, protection and assistance to local towns and cities from state government is needed.

• Legislative action may be needed for items such as:
  ➢ Reimbursement to communities for PFAS contamination
  ➢ Legal action
  ➢ Adoption of requirements pertaining to PFAS
THANK YOU!