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Reframing the Conversation Around Emerging Contaminants

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Presentation Overview

1. Framing: Where are we now?
2: Reframing: How can we shift?
3. Finding Center: A Proactive Path Forward
4. Keeping It Real
5. Questions

Framing The Issue

Where Are We Now?

Challenges We Face Together

- Emerging Contaminants
- Changing Regulations
- Rising Costs
- And more

Why Adopt Proactive Communications?

- Science evolving quickly
- Ubiquitous issue
- Low thresholds for new MCLs
- High costs to treat

Utilities on the Front Lines

- High profile issue
- Utilities connect directly with the public
- Public trust impacts:
  - Consumer confidence
  - Support for rate increases and capital projects

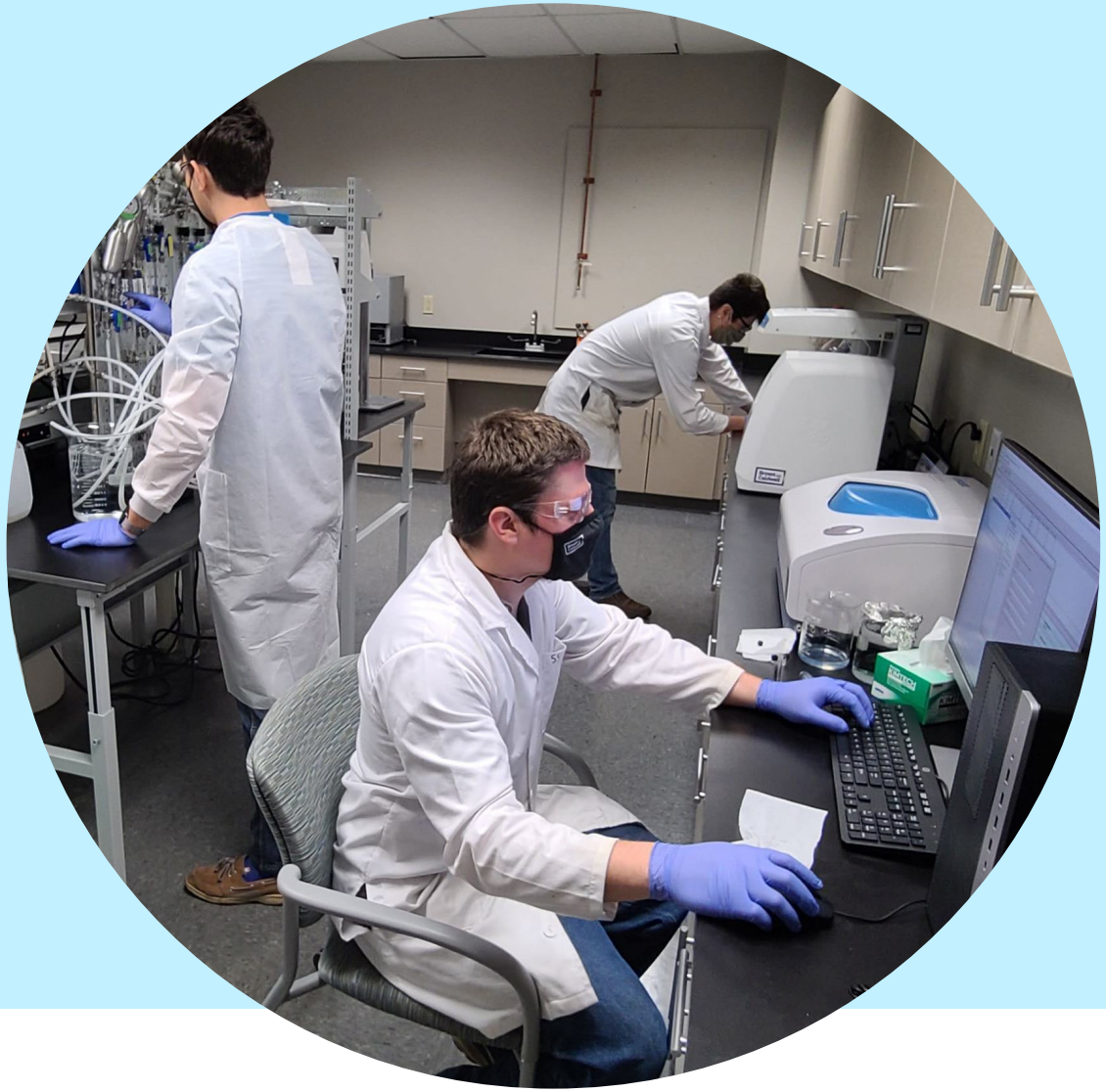
Reframing the Issue

How Can We Shift?

Telling the Story:

Utilities are Working Proactively

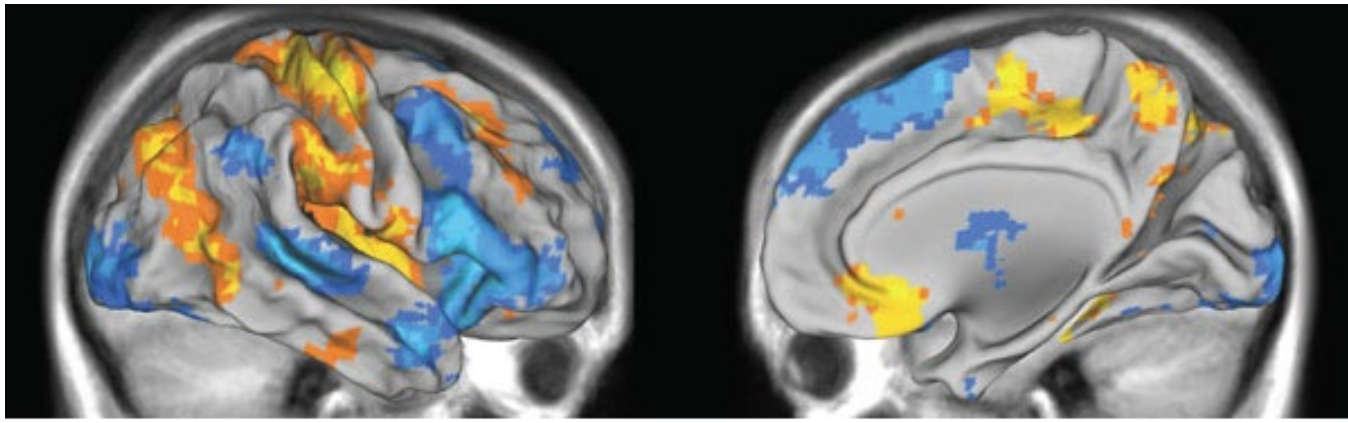
To Address PFAS and Emerging Challenges



Creative Water Solutions Require Fluid Thought

Cultivating Creative Thinking

- **Blue areas**
  - Focused attention
  - Stress response
- **Orange and yellow areas**
  - Creative problem solving
  - Broader perspective
  - Visioning
  - Empathy
  - Sense of purpose
  - Stress reduction



We are still learning

Data is incomplete

Risk is hard to define

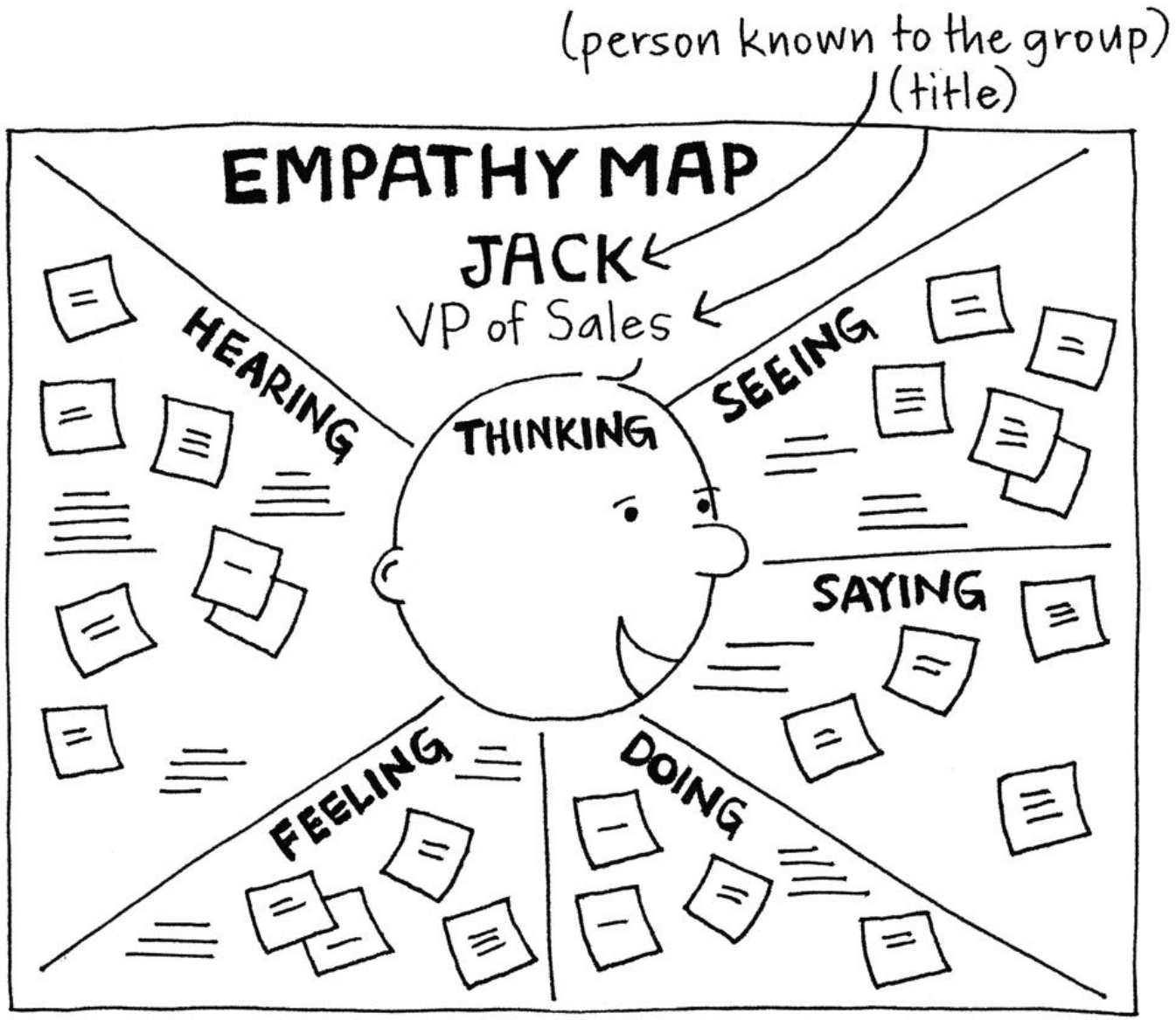
Yet, utilities must respond to customer concerns

Finding Center

A Proactive Path Forward

Ground, Assess, and Understand

- Come from a centered place
- Frame the issue/problem
- Assess audience groups
- Listen to understand


(person known to the group)
(title)
EMPATHY MAP
JACK
VP of Sales
HEARING
THINKING
SEEING
SAYING
FEELING
DOING

Example:
PFAS Communications Best Practices Guide

DO	DON'T
Show your commitment. Take this opportunity to connect and build positive relationships. Show up and listen. Utilities can play a key role in increasing public confidence through their direct connection with customers.	**Be defensive.** While reactiveness on the topic of PFAS is understandable, given changing regulatory guidelines and common public misperceptions, it does not build trust.
Acknowledge concerns. Hear customers' fears about potential exposure and health impacts.	**Minimize concerns.** People are legitimately worried about their health and the health of their families and loved ones.
Address the issue. Share commonly accepted information about PFAS sources, potential health risks, ways to minimize exposure, and how to learn more.	**Ignore the issue.** PFAS have reached a level of heightened concern, given their presence throughout the environment and inability to break down easily.

DO	DON'T
Share information that's understandable. Use clear visuals and simple figures. Minimize text.	**Get too technical.** Avoid industry jargon and acronyms. Provide definitions for technical or complex terms.
Share relevant information. Connect directly to interests, common concerns, and most likely exposure channels.	**Forget the context.** Provide information that connects directly with your audience's experience.
Show your work. Explain concrete actions that your utility or organization is taking to proactively meet regulations and address PFAS.	**Over-promise.** Clarify the time and resources needed to effectively address PFAS.
Use available resources. Consult reputable organizations for help in developing a communications approach and effective tools.	**Go it alone.** Connect with other utility leaders facing similar challenges. Consult materials and toolkits developed by organizations such as AWWA.

Tell a Compelling Story

- Connect with your audience
- Share your purpose
- Highlight benefits
- More data isn’t always better

Message Framework Example

Project Example: South Adams County, CO
Highlighting Project Purpose and Benefits

Telling a Project Planning Story in Simple Terms

Connect and Reflect

- Build relationships
- Adopt a reflective practice
- Collaborate with partners

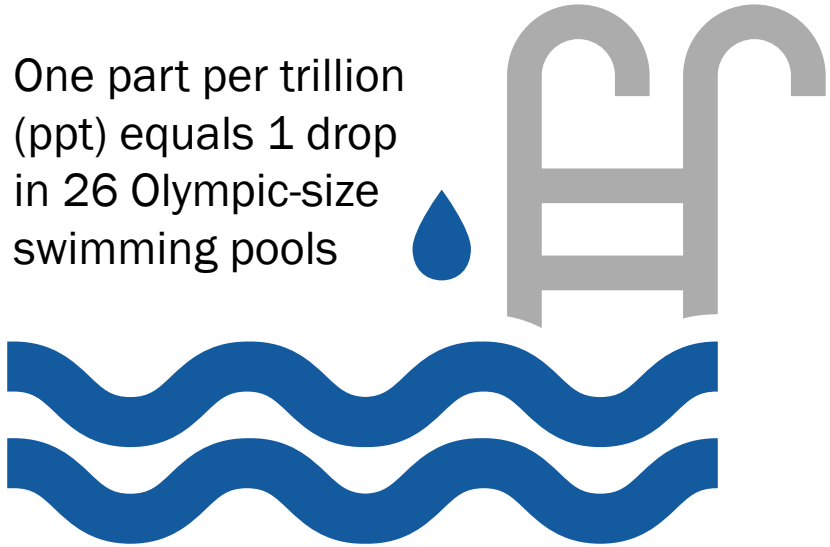
Keeping It Real

Demystifying Technical Details

Visualizing Risk

How Much is One Part Per Trillion?

One part per trillion (ppt) equals 1 drop in 26 Olympic-size swimming pools



OR

It is 1 second in 31,710 years

Visualizing the Issue

Engagement that Builds Trust

- Ground, Assess, and Understand
- Tell a compelling story
- Connect and reflect

Questions?

Thank you.

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