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**THE DOD'S MERIT PROGRAM ON EMERGING CONTAMINANTS**

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**ABSTRACT:** The Department of Defense (DoD) maintains a number of facilities throughout the country whose operations can significantly impact the quality of water in surrounding communities. Lessons learned concerning perchlorate leave no doubt that DoD needed to adopt a different approach to protect and sustain DoD's mission capability and in so doing ensure a sustainable approach to natural assets such as water.

Formed by the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (OUSD) for Installations & Environment in 2006, the Emerging Contaminants Directorate coordinates DoD's national policy on emerging contaminants (ECs) and is charged with implementing a new strategy to address them. The OSD defines ECs as chemicals or materials that are characterized by (1) a perceived or real threat to human health or the environment and/or (2) a lack of published health standards or a standard that is evolving or being re-evaluated. A contaminant may also be "emerging" because of the discovery of a new source, a new pathway to humans, or a new detection method or technology.

The Emerging Contaminant Directorate's goal is to support the Department's ability to proactively approach ECs to enable fully informed, risk-based investment decisions that protect human health and DoD's operational capabilities. Integral to the Directorate's mission is the role of the Materials of Emerging Regulatory Interest Team (MERIT). MERIT consists of individuals throughout DoD with a common interest in emerging contaminants.

This presentation will address:

- (1) The chemicals of concern thus far identified by the EC program for the DoD
- (2) The formation of "risk cubes" by the consensus of subject matter experts (SMEs) in a variety of defense-related applications and
- (3) The explanation of risk cubes and their implications for risk management of specific ECs

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