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**REGULATORY CONCEPTS FOR ADDRESSING
EMERGING CONTAMINANT THREATS--A STATE REGULATOR'S PERSPECTIVE**

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ABSTRACT: State and federal regulators are required, by their duty to protect public health and natural resources, to evaluate emerging risks from chemicals in the environment. This duty is particularly acute where the legislature has identified areas of concern and directed regulatory action. The duty to identify and characterize risk applies whether a chemical is a product or a waste, of specialized use or universal application. The benchmark is ensuring that the public health and environment are protected with an adequate margin of safety. Where water supply is potentially impacted by emerging contaminant risks, regulators must be particularly proactive.

Water in the West is a precious commodity, and with every year that passes, there is less to go around. Additionally, everyone uses common water supplies, so water supplies represent the broadest of exposure pathways for chemicals of concern.

This presentation will identify and discuss some of the regulatory mechanisms that regulators can use to address emerging contaminant risks.

In this context, I will discuss some of the recent regulatory initiatives undertaken in California-including regulatory action to address risks associated with perchlorate, pharmaceuticals, mercury and other chemicals, and compare our California initiatives to those underway in other states.

I will also compare different regulatory approaches-ranging in intensity from voluntary stakeholder initiatives (guided by regulatory policy) to outright product bans, and identify approaches that fall in between those two ends of the continuum.

Finally, this presentation will identify mechanisms for stakeholders, such as participants in the AWRA Vail Conference, to become more involved (and help shape) regulatory policy and action concerning the regulation of emerging contaminant threats. Regulatory action is designed to protect the public and environment-and this includes consideration of the economic impacts of regulatory action. With the input of concerned (and open minded) stakeholders, regulators are better able to identify the "big picture" and make decisions that balance competing interests accordingly.

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