(1) How has community advocacy shaped PFAS regulation and public health responses in Minnesota?

The community advocacy done in relation to passing Amara's Law has been essential in increasing community awareness of the dangers that PFAS exposure poses. Due to strong community support, this bill passed in 2023. They came together to send emails, made phone calls, showed up to testify, attended town hall meetings, and attended rallies at the Capitol. Those who couldn't come in person sent written testimony to legislative committee hearings. Many community members met with lawmakers and were pointed and passionate with their communication. They sent letters to the editor and talked to the media regarding the importance of passing (and protecting) Amara's Law.

Minnesota has a PFAS Blueprint:
https://www.pca.state.mn.us/air-water-land-climate/minnesotas-pfas-blueprint
and both the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the Minnesota Department of Health have dedicated pages on their websites to educating the community about PFAS
(https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/hazardous/topics/pfcs.html
and https://www.pca.state.mn.us/pollutants-and-contaminants/pfas)

Minnesota's agencies have been transparent in sharing information related to PFAS, and a conversation related to health monitoring has begun within the community and within Clean Water Action Minnesota.

(2) What were the most significant challenges you faced in gaining recognition of PFAS as a serious community health threat?

Misinformation was, and remains, a huge problem. Some information shared in an attempt to weaken Amara's Law included partial truths or could otherwise be considered misleading information. One such claim was that medical devices and MRI machines would be banned in Minnesota, despite the inclusion of an essential use exemption; Minnesota's law says that anything used for the health, safety, or functioning of society (like an MRI machine) is exempt from the ban. Further, industry shared that California vetoed their information disclosure law without also sharing that Governor Newsom praised the bill and stated that had it not been for their budget deficit he would have signed it into law.

As a nonprofit we rely on grant money and our members for financial support. Like many nonprofit organizations, we struggle with funding to do the work as fully and completely as we would like. We would have liked a better funded public awareness campaign but had a minuscule budget to work with.

Environmental issues tend to be very partisan, with Democrats believing climate change is real and a threat and wanting to take proactive measures to protect the environment. Republicans, on the other hand, tend to reject climate change as real and/or a threat. We have had to explain how PFAS exacerbates climate change while offering science and evidence proving that climate change is an environmental and health threat. We saw a slowdown from 2023 to 2025 in proactive PFAS regulation work as the Democratic majority in the Minnesota House of Representatives shrunk after the 2024 election.

(3) How do you ensure that vulnerable or low-income communities are included in PFAS related decision-making and remediation efforts?

Environmental justice is a huge focus for our organization. PFAS doesn't pick and choose where it contaminates. And because of the way water flows and plumes can shift, the contamination isn't contained in any specific area permanently.

We work to reach out to impacted communities to help them understand the threat they are exposed to and how they can take action – keeping in mind that remediation can be expensive. We use our phone and field canvass teams, social media, and other outreach methods to help Minnesotans understand what PFAS is, and the threat exposure can cause.

We suggest holding town halls and listening sessions to ensure the community is heard and involved in remediation efforts. You can see an example in Minnesota with how the impacted community is a part of determining the use of the 3M lawsuit settlement funds.

(4) Has Clean Water Action found success in influencing corporate behaviour or local government practices regarding PFAS use?

We take every meeting that is requested of us, and we also proactively reach out to ask for meetings with industry. We know we won't immediately change industry's minds about their use of PFAS. Our goal is to help them understand why PFAS is a danger and how they can benefit from moving away from using PFAS.

Anecdotally, I have seen many companies take proactive stances while I shop. They are labeling their products as PFAS free, and they have turned using sustainable and safe components into a marketing technique to increase sales. I see that business is finally understanding that consumers want safe products – safe products are much more profitable in the long run compared to those with PFAS.

Many cities and counties are now concerned about how PFAS contamination will impact their customers' water bills. Water treatment plants are expensive, and that cost is handed down to the taxpayer. Local governments are finding themselves having to consider who should be responsible for funding remediation. In some cases, it's clear where contamination comes from (such as the case with 3M in the East Metro or water supplies next to fire departments or military bases) and in some cases it isn't so clear, further complicating the issue of who should pay for the cost of cleanup.

(5) What are the most important elements of a public communication strategy when dealing with environmental contamination like PFAS?

We are honest and open with all communications. We make sure our communication is appropriate for the audience with clear language that is free from confusing scientific jargon. We suggest making sure you share messaging in a variety of languages and formats while making sure that the various governmental agencies are cohesive in their messaging, long-term goals, and short-term goals. Use messengers the community knows and trusts. Make sure the information being shared is timely and can be put out quickly in an emergency.

(6) Equity in Remediation (a) You mentioned outreach to Indigenous and low-income communities. What are the minimum best practices for inclusive remediation you would recommend to New South Wales?

Ensure that information is in the appropriate language and delivered in a method that is friendly to the audience.

Prioritize the most at-risk communities – consider chemical load and other toxic substances the community might be exposed to (such as lead pipes or air emissions) that compound the negative impacts of exposure.

Engage the community in listening sessions – hear out their concerns and offer information in a variety of formats (verbal, written, etc). Ensure that polluters are bearing the cost of cleanup, not the community.

Make sure you follow up and keep the conversation going. Make sure that trust is built by honoring promises and being honest. Acknowledge and honor past trauma, particularly in communities with a history of negative interactions with the government.

(7) Public Awareness and Behaviour Change

(a) How do you suggest New South Wales craft a communication strategy that breaks through PFAS complexity to engage the public? Are there templates or tested messages you can share?

Reminding people that the chemical industry has known of the negative health impacts from exposure for decades has been very impactful. The community needs to understand that this isn't a new discovery or a new problem. Industry has spent a lot of money on lobbyists to protect their investments in PFAS.

Use a variety of communications – radio, television, mail, social media, town halls, community tabling events, emails, billboards, etc. Make sure that communication is accessible in the appropriate language and written in a way that is easy to understand.

PFAS is an overwhelming topic, keep the communication specific to the audience and community being targeted. Discuss PFAS as a class of chemicals. I have reshared our one pagers – the first is from 2023 when we were originally working on Amara's Law and the second is from 2025 in response to the attacks that were launched against the law.

Our message has been clear: All PFAS that have been studied have been linked to health impacts, PFAS should be defined as one fully fluorinated carbon atom and addressed as a class of chemicals, the chemical industry has known for decades that these chemicals are toxic and that they bioaccumulate, and they are *not* essential to combat climate change.

(8) Product Disclosure and Supply Chains

(a) How did you manage pushback from international suppliers or retailers reluctant to disclose PFAS content? What lessons could help Australia prepare similar disclosure laws?

Our position was rather simple, if you are creating a product and PFAS is intentionally added to serve a function related to how that product is used/operates, then it is the responsibility of the manufacturer, suppliers, and retailers to know that. I gave a very simple example to legislators – as a mother, if my child has a moldy burger under their bed, they are responsible for knowing that moldy burger is under their bed. The same, simple logic applies to intentionally added chemicals in products. If it's intentionally added, it's there for a reason – you better know that reason as a manufacturer!

Also, yes – this might be hard. But just because something is hard doesn't mean we shouldn't do it. Doing hard things can mean life-saving change for countless people. Additionally, manufacturers are showing that while it may be difficult to discontinue the use of PFAS, it is not insurmountable.

Because we are a part of a network of other states in the country with disclosure laws, we don't require that companies report twice into the database. If they have already reported in Washington, we accept that report. Australia could accept what companies have reported in the USA as long as the requirements aren't less stringent in the USA compared to Australian requirements.