

Getting Practical With PFAS: Navigating the Challenges of Forever Chemicals

Podcast | Environmental Law Monitor

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Scott Churbock, senior vice president of enterprise risk and regulatory affairs at Montrose Environmental Group, Inc, joins Bracewell's [Daniel Pope](#) and [Steven Cook](#) to discuss the challenges and emerging technologies in combating (Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances) contamination, the implications for businesses and the environment as well as the evolving regulatory landscape. The trio discusses how the intersections of science, law and industry in addressing one of today's most pressing environmental issues.

Featured Guests

Name: [Scott Churbock](#)

About: Scott Churbock is senior vice president of enterprise risk and regulatory affairs at Montrose Environmental Group, Inc. He has 25 years of organizational management experience, with expertise in environmental compliance, sustainability and occupational health and safety. Scott's accomplishments include the implementation of ISO-based EHS management systems that led to multi-million dollar regulatory and loss prevention savings as well as injury reduction rates of more than 75% in his last two positions. Programs under his direction have received multiple leadership and excellence awards from the National Safety Council, representing top 5 percent performance in the industry.

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About: Steven Cook advises clients on matters involving environmental and natural resources law and policy.

Prior to joining Bracewell, Steven served as deputy assistant administrator at the Office of Land and Emergency Management of the Environmental Protection Agency.

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Episode Highlights

[01:53] **A Current Snapshot of PFAS:** Steven gives an overview of the current state of EPA regulations, new initiatives and the uncertainties that still linger.

[08:25] **How PFAS Regulations Are Starting to Affect Companies:** Companies are going to have to recognize the level of compliance and regulatory risks that PFAS poses for them. They may choose to be proactive and assess ways to eliminate potential sources of PFAS discharge.

[11:39] **The Challenges of Measuring PFAS:** In measuring PFAS levels, it is important to consider application, what one is looking for, testing requirements, methodology and testing equipment. The constantly evolving methodologies, techniques, technologies and regulations pose opportunities and challenges to maintain consistent testing and measuring obligations.

[24:45] **A Transition From Avoidance to Active Engagement of the PFAS Issue:** Companies are currently taking different levels of action against addressing PFAS. Scott notes that some companies are actively working with regulators, while other companies remain uncommitted to addressing PFAS given its many unknowns. Ultimately, choosing to act is a question of triage given what is known and the current technologies available to measure and address it.

[29:12] **Looking Ahead:** Daniel says it can be difficult to speculate what the future holds for solving the PFAS problem given the fluidity of existing standards, cleanup goals and the overall environmental regulatory environment. In many ways, there remains a tension between costs of sampling and cleanup and the emerging understandings of PFAS.

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