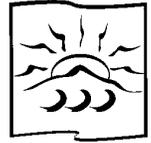


Pollution Prevention Week

Outreach

G•U•I•D•E

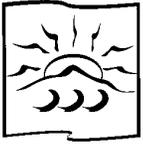


# Pollution Prevention Week Outreach Guide

## Table of Contents

Why Use Your Local Media? . . . . .	1
How to Use Your Local Media? . . . . .	1
It's Not as Hard as You Think . . . . .	2
Methods of Communicating with the Media	
Development of Your Own Story . . . . .	3
Press Releases and Advisories . . . . .	3
Press Conferences . . . . .	4
Press Briefings . . . . .	5
Editorial Board Meetings . . . . .	6
Radio and Television Talk Shows and Interviews . .	6
Additional Media Ideas . . . . .	7
Glossary of Media Terms . . . . .	8

---



# P2 Week Outreach Guide — 1

---

**A**s you know, using local media outlets, such as newspapers or radio and television stations, can be an effective and inexpensive means for dispersing information about your pollution prevention (P2) activities and heightening public awareness regarding P2 during P2 Week and year-round. There are also many useful tools for promoting P2 through these media outlets, such as press releases, press conferences, radio PSAs, and television interviews. As you read through this guide, think about the methods and tools that are most appropriate for doing outreach in your community and then, select a few to put into action. With a little effort, you can make a bigger media splash than you might think.

## Why Use Your Local Media?

**U**sing your local newspapers and radio or TV stations to get free coverage (as opposed to paid advertising) allows you to get your message across without incurring great expense. Media “stories” are usually viewed as more believable than advertising and often have more lengthy discussion of the subject than can be accommodated in paid ads. The disadvantage of non-paid media is that you have no guarantees that your story will be ran. You also have no control over how and when they will present it.

## How to Use your Local Media?

**T**he first step in utilizing your local media is to get to know your media contacts. Consider the following tips:

- develop a working rapport with reporters that cover your subject;
- provide reporters with basic information before they need it so they will have your name and the correct facts on hand when a story comes up, especially if you are not around to talk to them; and
- establish your credibility as a reliable source with solid facts and correct information.

## The basic steps for obtaining coverage are to:

- develop a list of local media contacts;
- inform the media about your programs; and
- inform the media about special events.

## The basic process for contacting the media is to:

- mail or fax the information via a letter or press release;
- follow up with a phone call soon after; and
- re-fax the release or letter because nine times out of ten the appropriate person did not received it.

**T**o contact the media, it is first necessary to develop a media contact list. By compiling your own local media lists, you will be better prepared to get the word out about your program when it comes time to organize press conferences and to send press releases or press advisories. Your ultimate goal will be to develop rapport with a few key people and to maintain an updated list of all appropriate media contacts.



## 2 — P2 Week Outreach Guide

---



### **Your list of media contacts should include:**

- names;
- addresses;
- phone numbers/fax numbers; and
- titles of people at local television stations, radio stations, daily and weekly newspapers and magazines.

### **When calling these media organizations, also gather information such as:**

- newspaper or magazine story deadlines;
- television and radio talk show schedules;
- acceptance criteria for Public Service Announcements (PSA);
- audience profile for the radio and television stations; and
- circulation of the newspapers and magazines.

Once you have developed a list, observe what kind of stories your local media covers, what kind of photos are included with stories, how reporters cover stories, etc. When it comes time to pitch a story to them, tailor your pitch to what you know they like.

When you have identified the reporters that are assigned to your issue, follow the stories they write closely. Observe their point of view and biases. Watch for reporters that are ‘friendly’ to your issue and those that are less friendly. Naturally, you should pitch most stories to the friendly reporter. You might want to set up a meeting with the less friendly reporter, (see press briefing section) to provide the information he or she needs to cover your issue with your points in mind.

If you don’t have the time or the resources available to compile a media list, you may want to consider purchasing a media list from a private publisher or perhaps ask a local public agency for a copy of its list.

Now that you know who the local media is, let them know about you and your program. If you routinely update them, they will regard you as an expert and may call you when they are working on stories. You may want to develop a media packet that you can send in advance and have readily available to fax or mail if they request it.

A media information packet is a quick and easy way to keep the media informed. It is wise to print your materials on two-sided, recycled paper and use folders made of recycled material as an example of your environmental standards.

### **The media packet should include:**

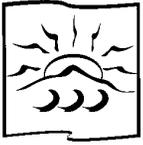
- factsheets on your local and statewide situation;
- outline of your programs, services and success stories;
- information on the benefits of pollution prevention;
- graphics or charts that relate to this information; and
- your business card.

Graphics and charts are always very effective when trying to paint a visual picture about pollution prevention opportunities. Also, a personal note (handwritten provides a personal touch) thanking them for their interest in your program and letting them know where you can be reached should they need anything in the future should be included. Establishing a friendly rapport will be extremely helpful should you need to contact them directly about a story or news event involving your organization or when they need a source for a story.

### **It’s Not as Hard as You Think**

Don’t get discouraged. Keep trying, keep contacting your media representatives. Build up that relationship that lets them know that you are a reliable source of information and stories, and your story will get told.

---



# Communicating with the Media

There are several ways you can maintain a line of communication with the media.

The six main methods include:

- ❶ Development of Your Own Story,
- ❷ Press Releases and Advisories,
- ❸ Press Conferences,
- ❹ Press Briefings,
- ❺ Editorial Board Meetings, and
- ❻ Radio and Television Talk Shows and Interviews.

The method you choose will depend on the time and resources available. Keep in mind, before you can get your story to the public, you must first “sell” it to the media. If the media isn’t interested, the public may never hear about it.

### ❶ Development of Your Own Story

Come up with a topic or idea you think would make a good story on the local news or in the local newspaper and pitch the story to the media. Use this approach if you do not have the resources to hold a press conference or to meet with editorial boards and broadcast station management.

Focus on the originality of your activities and their importance to the community’s efforts to prevent pollution. Be sure to use the following questions to develop your story:

1. What would make an interesting story?
2. What other programs or events are currently in the news in your community?
3. How might your program tie into those events?
4. What will be the impact of your program in the community?
5. Is this the first program of its kind to be implemented in your area?

Send a letter to solicit stories in newspapers, television stations, and radio stations about your P2 program and associated special events. Limit the letter to two pages and remember to keep it brief and concise. This is an opportunity to “sell” your program and highlight its benefits. Begin with an attention-grabbing sentence and present the details about your story idea in a newsworthy manner.

### ❷ Press Releases and Advisories

A press release (or news release) is a standard way to communicate with the media. As the words suggest, a news release is designed to “release” information about your organization and its programs. You do not need to have a press conference to release information. You can often get the same amount of print and radio media press coverage by sending a press release as when you hold a press conference.

A news advisory is the way to inform the media in advance when and where you are planning to hold a press conference or an event of interest to them. A news advisory is mainly who, what, where, when and why. If you give away all the information on your event, the media may do a story without attending your event which means no photos or filming and limited coverage.

Many newspapers have developed brochures to help you submit press releases and advisories to them. Check with your local paper to see if they have guidelines for you to follow.

A press release takes the least time and can get as much coverage as a press conference. Remember, each time you send out a press advisory or release, it is important to call the media and make sure they received it, see if they need more information, and ask if they will cover your event or run your story.

A press release for an event should be handed out at the event (not before) and sent or faxed to media that did not attend. An event press release should be written in past tense.

---

## 4 — P2 Week Outreach Guide

---



### ■ How do I write a press release or advisory?

Write a press release as if it were a newspaper article. Present an angle that will catch the reader's interest immediately. Here are two examples of lead sentences for the same press release. Which do you think will get the most interest from the media?

The San Rocko Department of Pollution Control today announced the winners of the Pollution Prevention Awards. The winners are...

After-the-fact pollution clean-up costs taxpayers millions of dollars a year, money that could be spent elsewhere in our tight economy. The San Rocko Department of Pollution Control is pleased to announce the Regional Pollution Prevention Awards winners who have helped solve...

After you have your lead sentence, include all information about the subject you are trying to convey in descending order of importance using the basic five "W's" and the "H" concept that all members of media use when they are broadcasting or writing a story.

### ■ Who-What-When-Where-Why-How.

A press release should contain this basic information. The general or broad information about your subject goes in the first paragraph and then begins to get more specific in the following paragraphs as your press release unfolds. Try looking at a few newspaper articles dealing with the same topic to get an idea of what you want to do.

### ■ Who will use my release?

Many smaller daily newspapers and weeklies will print your release verbatim. At major papers, radio and TV stations, your news release will be used to give a reporter ideas on how to approach a story. If possible and when appropriate, include a fact sheet with general information that could serve as background for the reporter. You can offer the factsheet during your follow-up call.

### ■ What is a news advisory?

Unlike a news release, a news advisory briefly announces a press conference or press event. An advisory should include:

- Contact person's name and phone number;
- What the press conference or press event is about;
- Where the press conference or press event will be held;
- What time the press conference or press event will take place; and
- Who will be speaking.

### ③ Press Conferences

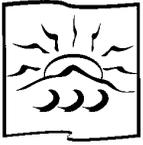
If you have a newsworthy story and a legitimate event, you may want to hold a press conference. Press conferences should have some visual activity for television media.

A press conference takes time and careful planning. Some ideas for what you can publicize through a press conference include:

- The start-up of a new program or service;
- An awards ceremony to recognize local businesses and people for their efforts to promote pollution prevention;
- Release of major information about your organization or a program sponsored by your agency; or
- A visual event, such as a demonstration of a P2 tip.

Remember, even if your press conference or press event is newsworthy, there is no guarantee the media, particularly television media, will cover it. It is smart to keep abreast of events that are scheduled to take place locally, statewide, and nationally. That way you can 'protect' your media coverage by scheduling your event so that it will not conflict with 'bigger' news taking place the same day. You obviously lose valuable time and money when you schedule something no one will cover. Unfortunately, you cannot protect yourself against a breaking news story such

---



## P2 Week Outreach Guide — 5

---

as a natural disaster, so choose your subject wisely and hope for good timing.

Try to make your event as visual and as intriguing as possible so your event will be competitive with other stories. If you are from a small community and depend on coverage from a local paper, especially weeklies with little staff, call before you schedule your event and ask them to suggest a convenient day.

### The Steps.

Once you've decided on a topic for your press conference here are the basic steps to take:

1. Send a press advisory prior to your event. Do not release too much information or they'll cover your story without coming to your press conference.
2. Make follow-up phone calls to remind media about your press conference the day before the event or whenever your local media prefers to be called. Some smaller papers like to be reminded a few days ahead.
3. Take black and white photos at the press conference to send out later.
4. Hand out press packets (see below), complete with a news release and vital information and statistics that will be covered at the press conference.
5. Follow up with any media not at the event to see if they would like a press packet, a copy of the press release, or to schedule a follow-up interview.
6. If possible, send your black and white photos from the event along with press packets to local weeklies and community papers.
7. Send thank-you letters to attendees.

### ■ What are press packets?

A press packet is similar to a media packet, but it contains information that is only pertinent to your press conference or press event. A folder similar to your media packet should be used and the press

packet should contain:

1. A news release;
2. Fact sheets and any appropriate background data; and
3. Your business card.

### ■ Keep track of media coverage.

In addition to thank-you letters, clip or record stories that were generated by the press conference and update your media listing with new contacts and phone numbers.

### ④ Press Briefings

A press briefing is an informal meeting with an individual or small group of the media at which you discuss issues relating to your agency and have tangible facts and information on hand to provide as background data.

### ■ Who do I invite?

Whoever is appropriate for your subject. For example, if the business reporter of your newspaper or local television station has been misreporting your issue, you can call and ask for a meeting to discuss the subject at length and provide whatever hard data is needed to make your case. Or, in anticipation of an issue coming up, you may want to meet with local media people to provide them with thorough background information and correct facts.

Media briefings should not be substituted for a press conference or special event and should only be held when a press conference or special event would be an inappropriate place to convey your information.

### ■ Cultivate good media relations.

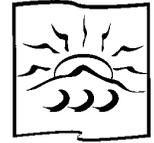
You will make the most of your briefings if you gain the trust of reporters. Always tell the truth. Before answering a question, imagine yourself in their shoes. What kind of additional information might they want? Always have pertinent information at your fingertips.

Remember that time constraints differ between print and broadcast media. Newspapers can devote more

---

# 6 — P2 Week Outreach Guide

---



space to a story and, therefore, usually want more information. On the other hand, broadcasters have a one-to-three-minute time limit on their reports. Keep these differences in mind when arranging your briefings.

## 5 Editorial Board Meetings

This is a meeting or presentation to the people who are responsible for determining the news, editorial and programming policies of the respective media organizations in your community. By meeting with them, you can:

- show them the importance of pollution prevention;
- answer any questions they may have about P2; and
- answer any questions they may have about your program's role in accomplishing the state's or your own P2 goals.

One way to promote Pollution Prevention Week is to get your media to support pollution prevention in an editorial. Editors are usually conservative and are concerned with the business impact. It's important they understand the potential savings and other benefits to businesses and the community in general.

Arrange or write to request a meeting to discuss Pollution Prevention Week with editorial boards for newspapers and the public service directors or station managers for the television and radio stations.

### ■ What to bring.

Specific information, such as what you would include in a media packet. Give it to each person in attendance. Key reporters or news editors who regularly cover environmental or business issues should also be invited in your request letter. Bring as many facts as possible. Give a thorough, but precise, presentation on your organization and on the subject of P2. Following the meeting, be sure to send a follow-up letter to each person who attended. Thank them for taking the time to meet with you, and tell them they may contact you at any time should they have any questions.

## 6 Radio and Television Talk Shows and Interviews

As a guest on a local talk show you can make your point YOURSELF, an advantage you do not have with the print media. Particularly on talk-radio, you can also discuss your subject at greater length and provide a broader view to the public. You may want to arrange to have someone with a pollution prevention success story join you on the show. The coordination of guests is handled by a producer. You should have background information on your topic, a list of potential questions they might ask, and a biography of guest speakers.

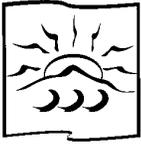
Check your local radio and television guides for the time local television and/or radio stations air talk shows. Take time to listen and watch programs that seem appropriate for your subject so you understand the format. Write to the Public Affairs Director or producer of the talk shows at each station. Describe your program briefly, outline your goal, and mention why you'd like to be a guest on the talk show and mention any other potential guests. Ask for air time and follow up your request a few days later with a telephone call.

A station representative can tell you if your subject fits into their proposed theme or if they will hold it for a future date. Let them know you are available for a telephone interview. They may decide to interview you immediately or may call you back. If they say they will call you back, be sure to let everyone in your office know you are expecting a phone call and to put the reporter through to you. There is nothing that kills media rapport quicker than flaking out on a story you pitched!

And don't forget public access television. Community programs air regularly on these channels and often are looking for stories to cover. You may be able to join your local cable access station and produce your own television programs!

Review the following points and write your own version on the back of your business card and keep it in your wallet. Before you are interviewed by the media, review the points on the card. You may also

---



# P2 Week Outreach Guide — 7

---

want to refer to it during your interview to be sure you are not forgetting anything.

## ■ List the five main points you want to make, for example:

- the date, time and nature of your event;
- businesses can save money by practicing pollution prevention;
- ways to prevent pollution are simple as...; and

## ■ Speaker tips:

- Have your main points ready.
- Be brief.
- Tell a brief success story.
- You don't have to respond to every argument from the media. When in doubt say, "The real issue is..."

## ⑦ Additional Media Ideas

### ■ Invitations to Cover and Calendar Notices.

- Both an Invitation to Cover and a Calendar Notice should include an address, time, and description of the event along with a contact name and number if they need more information.
- A Calendar Notice can easily be sent to a newspaper, radio or television station for use on their community bulletin board or calendar of upcoming events in the community. Call each media organization and ask for deadlines and guidelines for submitting calendar items.
- Invitations to Cover are sent out to inform the media about regular organization programs or events (i.e., community workshops, conferences or speeches to local civic organizations). Invitations to Cover should be sent out far enough in advance so the media can plan to cover the event.

### ■ Letter to the editor.

- Encourage members of the community to write a letter regarding your issue. Letters to the editor are particularly good when they respond to a

recent news story.

### ■ Publish your work.

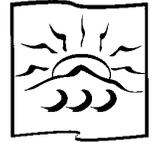
- Write an opinion article or guest editorial and submit it to your local newspaper. Read several opinion stories and articles from the newspaper before you write yours. Always be concise, yet informative and to-the-point when writing the letters or editorials.

### ■ Local newsletter.

- Write an article and submit it to club newsletters, such as an environmental organization, women's and men's groups, and PTAs. Newsletters provide a great deal of exposure to the public.

Additional means of promoting pollution prevention include advertisements on billboards, transit shelters, bus benches, and inside of buses; information on the outside of grocery bags; bill inserts with local waste haulers or other public agencies/utilities; and postage cancellation stamps, which can be arranged through your local post office.





# Glossary of Media Terms

The media, like most fields, has its own set of unique phrases, titles and buzz words. Here are some definitions for terms that you may encounter:

**Assignment Editor:** Person responsible for deciding and delegating what stories will be covered each day by a newspaper, radio, or television station. Unless you have a direct contact, this is usually the first person to call when you are pitching a story or a press event.

**Audience composition:** The demographic profile of audiences of a particular medium as determined by professional market surveys and analyses. Example: Of all the people viewing program A, 30% are adult males, 35% are adult females, 15% are teenagers, and 20% are children.

**Broadcast quality:** Type of audio or video tape that is submitted to a radio or television station for use in broadcasting that tape on the air.

**Byline:** The line, usually at the top or beginning of a newspaper story, indicating the name of the reporter(s) who wrote the story.

**Calendar Notice:** A small item printed in the “Calendar” or “Bulletin Board” section of newspaper informing readers of the date, time and location of an upcoming community event.

**Camera-Ready:** Any artwork, graphic, or photograph that is in a ready-to-use form for a printer or newspaper.

**Editorial Board:** High-ranking editors at a newspaper who decide what position the newspaper will take in its written editorial opinions.

**Editorial section:** The non-advertising portion of a magazine or newspaper. Editorial also refers to a written opinion that appears on the editorial page of a newspaper stating the newspaper’s or a guest writer’s position on a particular issue. Radio and television stations will sometimes, usually infrequently, broadcast editorials.

**Feature story:** Newspaper article or a radio or television story that is much longer in length and goes into more detail than a news story (Examples: historical profile of a business that practices P2).

**Intrusive:** Refers to the ability of a specific medium to intrude into the consumer’s awareness. Example: Television is intrusive in that everyone in a room is exposed to it whether or not they are watching it. Print is nonintrusive in that only the reader will be exposed to the message.

**Invitation to Cover:** An invitation to the media from your agency (usually in the form of a press advisory) alerting them to a small local event (i.e., workshop, advisory committee meeting) that might be of interest to them to attend.

**Lead:** The sentence at the beginning or first few lines of a printed or broadcast news story that quickly sums up what the story is about.

**Letter to the Editor:** A letter written to a newspaper in support of or in opposition to an article or editorial published by a newspaper. The letter can also voice support or opposition to a specific issue.

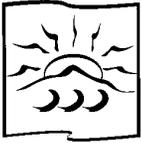
**Managing Editor:** Person in charge of running the day-to-day administrative operations of the editorial section of a newspaper.

**Media (or Press) Briefing:** An informal event such as a breakfast, lunch or general meeting where a small group of media is briefed on a particular program or other issue.

**Media Packet:** A folder containing general information, fact sheets and statistics about your agency; used primarily when making initial contact with individual members of the media.

**Network Television:** A number of stations (called affiliates) joined by communication lines to broadcast the same program, usually simultaneously. Not all cities carry all networks. ABC, CBS, NBC and FOX are networks.

**News Director:** Person at a radio or television station who decides what stories will be broadcast in the time allotted for news programming. At radio sta-



## P2 Week Outreach Guide — 9

---

tions with one- or two-person news staffs, the news director is usually the person responsible for broadcasting the news.

**News Editor:** Person at a newspaper who is responsible for deciding what news stories will be printed in the paper and on what page they will appear.

**News Story:** Newspaper article or a radio or television story that is generally about a serious subject.

**Op-Ed piece:** An article appearing on the Opinion or Editorial pages of a newspaper usually written by a columnist or an outside contributor, such as an academic, a member of the community or private sector, or a government official. Generally, an Op-Ed piece is serious in nature and conveys a person's particular view or stance on an issue.

**Pass-Along Readers:** Readers of a publication other than the purchaser or subscriber. (Examples: Magazines read at work, in doctors' offices, or on airplanes.)

**Passive:** Refers to the amount of effort required by the consumer to be exposed to the message in a specific medium. (Example: Television is a passive medium because the viewer is required only to turn it on to be exposed to the message. Print is not a passive medium because the consumer must read it to become exposed to the message.)

**Press Advisory:** A one-page document used to alert the news media about the date, time, subject, and location of a press conference or an organized community event, such as a public meeting or a promotional contest.

**Press Conference:** An event organized and held specifically for the benefit of the news media to announce important information.

**Press Packet:** A folder, distributed to the media attending a press conference, containing fact sheets, statistics, and information on the subject matter of the press conference.

**Press Release:** A supplemental document that is distributed to the media at and immediately following a press conference. The release usually reiterates, in

more specific detail, the information announced at a press conference. A press release can also be used independently of a press conference to relay general information or a statement to the media.

**Producer:** Person at a radio or television station who oversees the technical production and broadcast of a particular program, such as the evening news, a talk show, or public affairs show.

**Program Director:** Person at a television or radio station who generally oversees and decides what non-news programming is broadcast by the station.

**Public Affairs Director:** Person at a television or radio station in charge of all public affairs programming, including public affairs talk shows and the broadcast of PSAs. At a newspaper, this person acts as a liaison with the community through the organization and promotion of community events, such as fund-raisers, sporting events, and contests.

**Public Service Announcement (PSA):** A written, audio or video message that is sponsored and created by a nonprofit organization and broadcast by a television or radio station at no charge. A PSA generally runs 10, 15, 30 or 60 seconds in length. Guidelines for the acceptable format and length of the PSA vary from station to station.

**Publisher:** Person in charge of the day-to-day operations of a newspaper or magazine (expenditures, programming, production, advertising, news). Sometimes, the owner of a publication is also the publisher.

**Reach:** The number of individuals or homes exposed to a media broadcasting schedule within a given period of time (usually four weeks). Example: To determine the percentage of reach, take the number of different television households reached and divide by the total television households in a given market.

**Station Manager (General Manager):** Person in charge of the entire day-to-day operation of a television or radio station (expenditures, programming, production, advertising, news). At small radio and television stations, the owner often acts as the station manager or general manager.

---