



Effective Practices for Implementing Local Climate and Energy Programs: *Traditional Media Strategies*

Lessons Learned *by Communities for Communities*

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WHAT IS IT?

Traditional media—such as TV, radio, and print—can bring attention to newsworthy programs, raise their visibility, and motivate participation.

WHY DO IT?

- Traditional media is the main source of information for many people. It can help you reach a wide range of audiences.
- Many traditional media channels are free, such as newspaper stories, radio interviews, and public service announcements.
- Some traditional media organizations also have blogs, Facebook, Twitter feeds, and other social media. They can do a lot of social media work for you.

WHAT WORKS?

- Cultivate relationships with reporters and encourage them to write multiple stories covering the evolving components of your program.
- Look for opportunities to pitch success stories to the media.
- Invite the media to cover special, memorable events, such as groundbreaking ceremonies, ribbon-cutting events, or community stewardship projects.
- Write press releases in the form of articles and consider incorporating human interest stories. Make them easy for the media to use.
- Engage local political leaders or other high-profile community members in program activities and issue press releases about their involvement.
- Develop media sponsorships or event co-sponsorships.
- Ask the media to publish ads for free as a way of sponsoring your program's events.
- Leverage paid media by submitting public service announcements and requesting in-kind media services.
- Send reporters a follow-up note after the story is published and thank them for their accuracy or let them know if they missed something.

WHAT SHOULD YOU WATCH OUT FOR?

- Do not overthink (or overspend) the message.
- These stories can have a short-term effect and may not motivate behavior.
- It can be hard to maintain the media's interest over a long period of time.
- The media may have different priorities when promoting your story. They may spin the story in a way that they consider more interesting.

WHAT RESOURCES HAVE PROJECTS FOUND TO BE USEFUL?

MailChimp—Email newsletters: www.mailchimp.com



“After the local paper ran a story about our program on Sunday, we came into the office on Monday morning and found dozens of messages from new clients.”

Alex, Sustainable Connections, Bellingham, Washington

“Everyone loves to see themselves on TV. When it is publicized, they will invite all of their friends and family.”

Climate Showcase Communities project lead