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## Regional Litter Prevention Campaign Media Outreach Tips

Please keep the following tips in mind as you conduct outreach around the Regional Litter Prevention Campaign.

### Background Research

- In advance of contacting a reporter, it is helpful to:
  - Know the reporter's title, what "beat" (topic) they cover and review the publication's Website.
  - Obtain samples of the reporter's past work to determine the content and tone of their writing and the publication, if possible.

### Introduction

- Before calling a reporter, send them any relevant background material (news release, advisory or fact sheet, spokesperson bio).
- Your first phone contact should serve as a follow-up to materials you have already emailed.
- Introduce yourself clearly; state your name and organization.
- Inquire as to whether or not they have time to talk.
- If they are on deadline, ask them when you can call them back.
- If they are available to talk, let them know that you are following up on an email, indicate the day you sent the materials, and refresh their memory by giving them a brief overview of your story.
- **Do not** read off the news release or advisory verbatim. **Instead**, select the top three most relevant points and present them in a conversational tone in 30 seconds or less.

### Interest & Relevance

- Convey to the reporter why your story is of interest to their readers.
- Make your story as relevant and compelling as possible, for instance:
  - Is there a financial impact?
  - Is this breaking news?
  - Are there new data findings to share?
  - Is this timely news surrounding current events?
- Avoid jargon and lengthy descriptions. Speak in clear, plain language.
- Stick to facts; avoid speculation or making promises you can't deliver.

### Questions

- Leave the conversation open to questions. If the reporter asks questions, it is an indication that they are engaged and interested.
- If you are unable to answer the reporter's questions, it is perfectly appropriate to say: "I don't have an answer to that, but I'll make sure to find out and get back to you."
  - It is imperative that you get back to them promptly.
- Follow-up helps establish dialogue with the reporter. However, be careful that you do not become a nuisance by inundating them with phone calls and emails.

- Make the reporter's job as easy as possible by providing all the necessary information in a few brief conversations or emails.

### **Interview**

- If there is a spokesperson available, offer the reporter a face-to-face or phone interview with that individual.
- Accommodate the reporter's schedule as much as possible.

### **Follow-up**

- Once you have supplied the reporter with all the necessary information, you should allow time for him/her to complete their story. It is appropriate to ask them when they think the story might run so that you have a sense of if/when you should follow up.
- An email or phone call to follow-up on the story is appropriate closer to the expected air/print date to determine if the story will run.
- Even if a reporter confirms your story will run, it is always possible it will be edited or cut completely. If the story isn't placed immediately, it may still be included at a later date.

### **Thank you**

- Send a thank you note or email to the reporter to express gratitude for their time. This is especially important if your story gets placed, but equally important if the reporter has expressed particular interest or spent significant time on the story.
- This courtesy leaves a positive and lasting impression on the reporter, making them more likely to call you the next time there is an opening for your story.