Communication Essentials

Every agency, large and small, has to communicate with its ratepayers and other stakeholders. Just having a website or a brochure isn’t sufficient because people get their information in different ways. Communications have many facets to consider when planning your outreach activities.

Consider Your Audience

In everything you do, think about who your audience is, and communicate with them in mind. It’s not only your ratepayers but others that need information about your agency’s business.

- Target audiences include:
  - Ratepayers
  - Local and state elected officials
  - Local business and development industry
  - Media – newspapers, radio, television, and a growing segment, online media
  - Interest groups including environmentalists, taxpayer groups, senior, sports leagues and more.

Determine your Objectives

Why do you need to conduct outreach?

- People have the right to know how your agency operates
- People should know what is acceptable to go down drains and toilets
- Good customer service and transparency are essential!
- You’ll find that people will find your operations are very interesting

Determine your Strategy

How do you determine the best outreach strategies for your agency?

- Look at your objectives first
- Set a budget for annual outreach activities
- There should be one point person who is the official voice of your agency
- Develop a strategic outreach plan
Execute your Strategy

Execute your communication efforts based on your strategic plan

- Think about your staff resources and limitations
- Communications should be eye-catching
- Consider what is important to the ratepayer – low rates, a clean environment, and good customer service
- Look at your ratepayer demographics

Engage your Audience

Mailing newsletters and using social media are effective tools, but people also react favorably to face-to-face interactions.