

O'Rorke, Inc.

FY 2002-2003

**Regional Media Relations Campaign
Final Report**

BAY AREA STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ASSOCIATION

BAY AREA CLEAN WATER AGENCIES

July 1, 2002 – June 30, 2003

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FY 2002-2003 Regional Media Relations Campaign

Executive Summary

The two goals of the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) and the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association's (BASMAA) media relations campaign are to: 1) firmly establish the agencies as media contacts on water quality and pollution prevention issues, and 2) generate media coverage that encourages individuals to adopt behavior changes to prevent water pollution. The FY 02-03 campaign has been successful in achieving both of these goals. A media survey conducted mid-year indicated BASMAA and BACWA are firmly established as credible sources for information on the region's water quality issues with 80% of reporters indicating that they would contact the agencies for information if they were working on a water quality related story.

Additionally, media placements reached an all-time high this year, with extensive coverage across all mediums on a variety of topics, including mercury, lindane, fats, oils and grease, and the 10th anniversary of the Regional Monitoring Program. Overall media coverage increased approximately 40% this year over last from 32 media placements to 44. Additionally, FY 02-03 resulted in a significant increase in the estimated dollar value of media coverage.

A wide range of planned news stories were pitched beginning in July 2002 through June 2003. Media coverage was pursued on seven planned pitches: one each on vehicle pollutants, lindane, litter, fats oils and grease, the Regional Monitoring Program, and two on mercury. These media pitches resulted in very high-quality, in-depth coverage. Some placement highlights include a package by consumer reporter Emerald Yeh on fats, oils and grease that aired during the Thanksgiving holiday, and the extensive print coverage of the anniversary of the RMP.

This year, BASMAA and BACWA continued to look for opportunities to respond to breaking news stories, though opportunities were not as abundant as in past years. However, the agencies were successful in responding to a breaking news request from a reporter at the Fairfield Daily Republic who was working on an article about household hazardous waste. An interview was arranged with Gail Chesler of the Central Contra Costa Sanitary District and a positive article was placed.

Another notable achievement included the increase in collaboration with outside agencies on media pitches. BASMAA and BACWA partnered with CalTrans on a planned pitch on litter, that resulted in CalTrans using BASMAA/BACWA's press release in their newsletter which is circulated to 4,500 current and past employees. Additionally, BASMAA/BACWA teamed up with the San Francisco Estuary Institute on the RMP pitch.

Overall, 44 articles and broadcast stories were covered by the media in FY 02-03, including 18 print articles, 12 television stories, nine radio stories, and five web stories. Public service announcements (PSAs) on proper disposal of mercury-containing products also aired on five

radio stations. Additionally, KCBS also ran the PSAs on its website—something new for this campaign. (See Appendix A, Press Report.) O'Rorke estimates the value of this coverage to be \$122,125 if placements are viewed in comparison to the cost of advertising with these media outlets.

Although high-quality media coverage has been achieved each year, this year was marked by the newsworthiness of the anniversary of the Regional Monitoring Program (RMP) and the release of ten years of monitoring data on the state of the Bay. This information was used strategically to construct a pitch that would appeal to reporters with more serious, news-oriented beats, such as environmental and science writers. This pitch garnered 21 placements. During the week following the annual meeting of the RMP, the San Francisco Estuary Institute (SFEI) Web site received over 2,600 download requests for the 2003 Pulse report, and their new media coverage page became the third most popular page on the SFEI Web site. Mention of the 2003 Pulse is also expected in the upcoming issues of Bay Nature magazine.

The total value of this year's coverage was \$122,125 a 22% increase over FY 01-02 (See Appendix E, Figure 2). As Appendix E, Figure 3 illustrates, the agencies that contributed funding to the campaign received a tremendous return on their investment. The seven BASMAA members contributed an average of \$3,500. The five BACWA principal agencies contributed an average of \$5,000. Given the total value of coverage received in FY01-02 was \$122,125 each BASMAA member received approximately \$34.00 worth of coverage for every dollar invested in the campaign and each BACWA principal received \$24.00 worth of coverage for every dollar invested. The return was even greater for BACWA's associate members that invested fewer resources to the campaign than BACWA principals.

The process of securing good media relationships continued this year, particularly with KRON-TV, San Jose Mercury News, and the Fairfield Daily Republic. BASMA/BACWA's pitch on the RMP left an impression on Douglas Fischer of the Oakland Tribune who remarked that he was impressed that the story swept all the major dailies in the region—high praise for an industry insider. New relationships were created with Barry Eberling of the Fairfield Daily Republic and relationships with Emerald Yeh of KRON-TV and Holly Hayes of the San Jose Mercury News continued to be strong. This year's planned pitches were also diverse enough to allow us to call on a variety of reporters covering different beats, thus enhancing relationships across the board.

There were two new components to this year's campaign. One was a media mailer designed to remind media personnel about the agencies and key spokespeople. The mailer, developed in FY 01-02, included a simple letter with contact information about each of the agencies' major spokespeople. The second was a survey of media personnel designed to attain qualitative information on how the agencies' pitches and materials are being received—both by media personnel who have and haven't directly covered BASMAA/BACWA. The survey showed that the majority of media personnel view the agencies and spokespeople as credible sources of information. The complete media survey report is attached (see Appendix F).

What follows is a complete report on accomplishments for the major tasks as outlined in the FY 02-03 scope of work and recommendations for FY03-04. Appendices include: Press Reports (Appendix A), Budget by Project (Appendix B), Print Articles (Appendix C), Circulation Information for Media Outlets (Appendix D), Comparison of FY99-00, FY00-01, FY01-02, and FY02-03 Media Placements (Appendix E, Figure 1), Comparison of Estimated Media Value

(Appendix E, Figure 2), Comparison of Agency Contributions to Value of Media Coverage (Appendix E, Figure3) and the Media Survey Report (Appendix F).

Recommendations for FY 2003-04

Recommendations for FY03-04 include the following:

- Maintain a strong presence with key reporters and media personnel; continue to pitch good quality stories on a regular basis.
- Coordinate with BACWA and its contractors on pitches as appropriate.
- Utilize a calendar of seasonal pitches that will serve as signposts throughout the campaign year and serve the local programs by placing a more general overall water pollution message at key times throughout the year.
- Identify a roster of foreign language spokespeople so the campaign can concentrate more efforts on pitches to ethnic/in-language media using designated spokespeople.
- Ensure that the roster of pitches planned for FY 03-04 include a range from lighter stories to those with more news potential for greatest placement success.
- Evaluate campaign success by comparing number of placements and monetary value of media coverage garnered in FY03-04 to media coverage attained in previous years.
- Identify new partners for media pitches, particularly those who can contribute to the campaign via additional funding or in-kind donations of agency time and resources.
- Consider a specific partnership with a public health agency in order to pitch a given topic (e.g. pesticides) from both an environmental and human health standpoint since it is clear there is great media interest (and public interest) in pollution as a health issue.
- Include a work plan element that will allow contractors time to more closely evaluate web coverage of media stories (inclusion on media/news websites, hits, viewers, etc.).

Task A Accomplishments

Generate long-term relationships with regional media outlets and establish BASMAA/BACWA representatives as information sources on water quality and pollution prevention issues.

Building relationships with the media continued in FY 02-03. Due to continual, regular pitching to the media on behalf of the agencies, an excellent springboard existed from which to pitch BASMAA/BACWA's stories this year (see Task B). Relationships continued to be advanced in two ways. Media relationships were enhanced through the consistent, ongoing presence of the agencies and the quality of the stories pitched. This year, additional insights were gained into these relationships via the media survey conducted mid-year.

In part, media success is a numbers game. The more pitches conducted over time, increases the likelihood of more quality media coverage. This has definitely held true for BASMAA/BACWA, as evidenced by the strong media foothold achieved by this campaign in the last five years.

The media survey provided constructive feedback on story pitches and materials from editors and reporters. In total, twenty media professionals were surveyed between December 2002 and February 2003. Eleven of those surveyed had covered BASMAA/BACWA stories in the past and nine had not. Sixty-five percent of the respondents recalled seeing campaign materials, such as press releases and e-mails; slightly less than half recalled a specific pitch. Sixty percent of the reporters surveyed gave very high marks for the quality of materials. Likewise, BASMAA/BACWA spokespeople were also highly regarded by 60% of the respondents. Eighty percent of the respondents indicated that they would contact BASMAA/BACWA as a source of information if they were working on a story. Those who participated in the survey received a gift (a clock with the agencies' names) and a note thanking them for participating in the survey.

To further enhance media relationships, the concept of sending a letter to key media personnel was devised including brief biographies on the campaign's four principal spokespeople and highlighting a number of activities that reporters could attend to help increase reporters' understanding of water quality issues. The letter was written and prepared in the spring of 2002. Follow-up phone calls were conducted this year and although most personnel seemed to appreciate the reminder letter, most were not interested in boat rides or other excursions to learn more about water pollution prevention (the letter offered these activities as an option). Because media personnel can change frequently and newsrooms are busy places, these types of "reminders" are important for continued media success.

Additionally, thank-you notes were prepared and/or reporters were called or emailed when stories were placed to foster good long-term relationships on behalf of BASMAA/BACWA.

Task A Recommendations:

- Send reminder emails with information on key spokespeople one-two times per year.
- Pitch good quality stories on a regular basis to maintain a strong presence with key reporters and media personnel.
- Utilize the BACWA website as a place to post background and contact information on the agencies' key media spokespeople for easy access by media personnel as needed.
- Capitalize on the media's interest in TMDLs by conducting serious news pitches as the TMDL process unfolds in the region. This will continue to solidify relationships with environmental reporters who have a hard news focus.
- Remind spokespeople to use the name "Bay Area Clean Water Agencies" when being interviewed, both for name recognition and to avoid confusion with the media.

Task B Accomplishments

Generate balanced regional media coverage aimed at promoting individual behavior changes leading to water pollution prevention.

In FY02-03, stories were pitched to generate a large quantity of coverage on subject matter and to generate very high-quality coverage that addressed BASMAA/BACWA's key issues. Seven media pitches were pursued for BASMAA/BACWA on the following topics: lindane, vehicle pollutants, litter, fats, oils and grease, RMP, and mercury (two pitches). A summary of the coverage attained follows below.

Because this is a regional campaign, another goal was to ensure that the coverage attained reached the Bay Area. This goal was attained as major stories ran on KRON-TV, KPIX-TV, KGO-TV, KCBS-AM, KSRO-AM, San Francisco Chronicle, San Jose Mercury News, Fairfield Daily Republic, Oakland Tribune, Contra Costa Times and numerous other East Bay Dailies.

Mercury

Two pitches were conducted on mercury over the course of the year. The first pitch focused on the ban of mercury thermometers in California. The pitch resulted in seven media placements, including articles in all the major East Bay Dailies, a segment on KGO-TV and a placement on the KGO website.

The second pitch was the development of PSAs that addressed the dangers of mercury in local waterways through improper disposal of mercury-containing products. Public service announcements were prepared offering information on safer products (such as digital thermometers) and referred listeners to 1-800-CLEANUP for disposal information. This pitch resulted in six overall placements, including PSAs running on five stations, and a posting on one website.

Lindane

In FY01-02, an article encouraging parents to use safe alternatives to treat head lice rather than using lindane was prepared targeting Bay Area Parent magazine for placement. The article explained what lindane is, what it is used for, how it gets into waterways, how it effects water, and offered a safe alternative process to remove head lice. This pitch resulted in three print placements in FY02-03 in various editions of Bay Area Parent.

Local Press Release for Rainy Season

A press release was developed for local agency use. The topic was vehicle pollution caused by runoff from the first rains of the season. Although very little feedback on the utilization of this release was received from the local agencies, the effort resulted in one print placement in the Contra Costa Times.

Litter

A press release was developed in collaboration with CalTrans. The release highlighted CalTrans efforts to keep trash off roadways and the agencies' concern about trash as a pollutant during the rainy season. The release was sent three times on rainy days. The pitch resulted in three radio placements and an article in CalTrans employee newsletter, which has a circulation of 4,500.

Fats, Oils and Grease

A targeted pitch was conducted on fats, oils, and grease prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. The pitch focused on sewer blockages and overflows caused by the byproducts of cooking. KRON-TV's Emerald Yeh produced an extensive story on the topic and made a site visit to the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Plant. This pitch resulted in seven placements, including three print stories, three television stories and one web posting.

Regional Monitoring Program

The year 2003 marked the 10th anniversary of the Regional Monitoring Program. To commemorate this event, the San Francisco Estuary Institute released a report at a public meeting on the health of the Bay based on 10 years of monitoring data. A pitch was constructed to highlight the newsworthiness of this event. Reporters were pitched in advance of the public meeting and embargoed copies of a press release and the report itself were provided so that stories could run the day of the meeting. This pitch resulted in extensive coverage. Overall, there were 21 media placements on this story.

Breaking News Response

A letter to the editor was prepared in response to a story in the SF Chronicle on woodburning fireplaces. The letter was drafted for Geoff Brosseau's signature. Unfortunately, the letter was not placed because the op-ed and letters pages of the paper were dominated by correspondence having to do with the war in Iraq during that time.

Additionally, Fairfield Daily Republic reporter Barry Eberling contacted O'Rorke when he was working on a story about household hazardous waste—a strong testament to the success of the relationship-building process. In a quick turnaround, O'Rorke arranged for Eberling to interview Gail Chesler. A comprehensive story placed in the Fairfield Daily Republic and Chesler was prominently quoted.

Value of Media Placements in FY 02-03

Although there is no clear-cut way to assign monetary value to media coverage, the value of print articles and broadcast stories (collectively referred to as media placements) garnered in FY 02-03 is estimated at \$119,625. This figure was derived by reviewing all media placements and assigning a fair market value cost to them if they had been purchased as advertising time or space. For example, a quarter page ad in the San Francisco Chronicle's Home & Garden section costs \$7,600; an article of comparable size in the section, then, is valued accordingly. Currently peak drive-time rates on KCBS are about \$1,200. The typical news story will air on KCBS at least 12 times in one day, with most of those placements falling during peak drive-time hours. Additionally, O'Rorke sought out estimates on the value of tie-in internet coverage from media salespeople and those were included in the valuation. Note: Wire service stories and letters to the editor were not factored into this value estimate because there are no advertising comparisons to be made for these venues.

While media relations does not offer the guaranteed placements that advertising does, press coverage brings a special value to an effort that is hard to quantify. The credibility provided by a media outlet, a specific reporter or anchorperson to a story really elevates the quality of media coverage. People often naturally trust something they see on the evening news or read on page

one of the San Francisco Chronicle or San Jose Mercury News. Today's consumers are also savvy to advertising and marketing practices aimed at getting them to buy products. For this reason, consumers increasingly view paid ads with skepticism. Media coverage avoids this kind of negativity entirely.

Value of PSAs Placed in FY 02-03

O'Rourke estimated the value of PSA coverage garnered in FY 02-03 at \$2,500. The value was estimated using two methods: actual declared value of PSAs if provided in affidavit form by a station, and by creating a formula after calculating an estimated number of times each station was likely to run the PSAs and assigning an average value across all stations.

To calculate the value of PSAs, last year's figures were reviewed and media sales representatives were consulted. Because little has changed from last year to this year, the average spot value was calculated at \$100 and it was assumed each station ran the PSAs five times. A total of five stations ran BASMAA/BACWA's PSAs this year.

PSAs are usually sent in three lengths: 15, 25 and 30 seconds. Average value of PSA coverage was obtained by factoring in time of broadcast, current advertising rates and length of spots. Because most radio stations charge the same rate for 30-second PSAs as for 60-second PSAs, advertising rates for 30-second spots were used as the starting point for determining value.

This year, an analysis of the past four years of the campaign was also conducted in order to take a critical look at media placements achieved and estimated coverage value over time. Although the media can be a fickle friend, particularly when covering stories related to government agencies and environmental issues, this campaign has remained strong over time. The campaign has consistently achieved high quality coverage on a diverse range of topics. In fact, the coverage analysis also showed that introducing new topics in FY 02-03 definitely benefited the campaign. For example, numerous stories were achieved as a result of pitches on fats, oils and grease, and the Regional Monitoring Program.

Overall, the analysis indicates that the campaign has been consistent in achieving coverage and that the value of media coverage is substantially increasing. In FY 02-03, media coverage increased by 22% over FY 01-02 and 55% from the previous year when the campaign first began tracking the value of media coverage. Anecdotal feedback from reporters has also demonstrated that this long-term presence has built good media relationships and created a strong interest in water pollution issues.

Total Value of PSAs and Media Placements in FY 02-03: \$122,125

Task B Recommendations:

- Use a calendar of seasonal pitches generated by BASMAA/BACWA that will occur throughout the year.
- Conduct a hard news pitch on the current state of the TMDLs process in the region to follow-up on previous pitches on this topic.

- Focus concerted pitches toward ethnic audiences through the use of ethnic media and bilingual spokespeople.
- Include a breaking news component as part of media pitches.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate on media pitches with other partners such as health and transportation agencies. BASMAA/BACWA's ongoing collaborations with the BAAQMD have proved successful in generating media coverage during the last two years.
- In late summer, begin planning joint winter pollution pitch with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.
- Avoid writing original articles for placement in newspapers or magazines. Although the lindane piece did eventually run in the targeted publications, this was a very lengthy and time-consuming task—time better spent directly on pitches.
- When feasible, try to pitch stories toward the weekend for better possible chances of coverage in hard-to-get press, such as news radio.
- Include a variety of topics in the FY 03-04 work plan to keep campaign momentum going and to secure maximum media interest and placements. The topics should include a range from lighter stories (on par with fats, oils and grease) to more news-oriented topics.
- Consider whether a campaign similar to “spare the air” can be developed for water pollution issues as suggested by Tom Vacar, Consumer Reporter at KTVU-TV during the media survey.

APPENDIX A: Press Report

PITCH	PRINT	TELEVISION	RADIO	WEB	PSA'S	OVERALL PLACEMENT
Ban of Mercury Thermometers	Oakland Tribune 07/08/02 Tri-Valley Herald 07/08/02 Argus 07/08/02 The Daily Review 07/08/02 Alameda Times-Star 07/08/02	KGO TV Michael Finney spot On 5:00p.m. newscast 7/1/02		KGO website		7
Lindane Article	Bay Area Parent East Bay Bay Area Parent Silicon Valley Bay Area Parent SF & Peninsula					3
Litter Pitch (with Caltrans)	Caltrans newsletter (went to 4,500 people)		KLIV AM KSRO AM Undetermined Station (Interview In October w/ Greg Bayol)			4
Local Press Release (vehicle pollution)	Contra Costa Times 10/11/02					1
Fats, Oils, & Grease	San Jose Mercury News 11/27/02 Fairfield Daily Republic 12/01/02 Marin Independent Journal 11/28/02	KRON TV Emerald Yeh package 11/27 @9:00PM 28 th @5:00AM 28th@5:00PM		KRON website		7

PITCH	PRINT	TELEVISION	RADIO	WEB	PSA'S	OVERALL PLACEMENT
Mercury PSAs				KCBS website	KBLX KUFY KSJO KCNC KFJO	6
RMP Pitch	San Francisco Chronicle 5/13/2003 Oakland Tribune 5/13/2003 Contra Costa Times 5/13/2003 San Jose Mercury News 5/13/2003	KRON TV Ramon package 5/13 @5:00PM 5/13 @ 6:00PM Mention 5/13@11PM Mention 5/14 @8AM KPIX TV Mention 5/13 @4:30PM Mention 5/13 @5:00PM Russomanno Package 5/13 @ 6:30PM NBC11 Mention 5/13 @ 8AM	KCBS AM aired interview @ 7:15 & 8:15AM 10:05 & 11:05 AM KQED FM mention on 5/13 KFOG FM Mention on 5/13	KRON website KPIX website KCBS website *Also: (SFEI website got 1,600 hits in one day)		21
Breaking News Response	Fairfield Republic (household hazardous waste) 5/15/2003					1

*Non-media

APPENDIX B: Budget by Project

BASMAA/BACWA BUDGET FY 02-03

Tasks	Amount Spent
Hard Costs Transportation, Misc., Refreshments for Training, Etc.	\$354.62
ORPR Services General Tasks, Mtg. Attendance, Reports, Final Report	\$7,173.00
ORPR Services Media Survey	\$4,423.00
ORPR Services Media Mailer Follow-up Calls	\$572.00
ORPR Services Designated Pitches	\$19,220.00
ORPR Services Responses to Breaking News	\$308.00
Total Amount Spent	\$32,050.62 (as of 6/1/03)
Total Budget	\$37,000.00
Total Remaining	\$4,905.38

APPENDIX C: Print Articles

Print articles are available upon request. Contact Chase Roberts at O'Rorke Inc. (415) 543-9119 or chase@ororkepr.com.

APPENDIX D: Circulation & Average Audience Size Information

Television

KRON-TV average daily audience size = 509,850
KPIX-TV average daily audience size = 601,112
KGO-TV average daily audience size = 116,000
NBC11-TV average daily audience size= 161,000

Radio

Average daily audience sizes for the following Bay Area radio stations:

KBLX- FM	=	310,000
KCBS-AM	=	901,000
KCNL- FM	=	155,000
KFJO- FM	=	29,000
KFOG-FM	=	444,000
KLIV-AM	=	54,000
KQED-FM	=	598,000
KSJO- FM	=	247,000
KSRO-AM	=	36,000
KUFX- FM	=	204,000

Print

Average circulation for the following Bay Area newspapers:

Alameda Times Star	=	7,300
Bay Area Parent East Bay	=	55,000
Bay Area Parent Silicon Valley	=	77,000
Bay Area Parent SF & Peninsula	=	65,000
Caltrans Newsletter	=	4,500
Contra Costa Times	=	182,682
Daily Review	=	37,000
Fairfield Daily Republic	=	21,465
Marin Independent Journal	=	40,267
Oakland Tribune	=	67,308
San Francisco Chronicle	=	527,466
San Jose Mercury News	=	283,757
The Argus	=	31,873
Tri-Valley Herald	=	33,535

Internet

KRON4.com	1.5 Million page views per month
KGO-TV	30,000-40,000 page views per month
KPIX-TV	2 Million page views per month
KCBS-AM	3 Million page views per month

Appendix E. Figure 1. Comparison of Media Placements

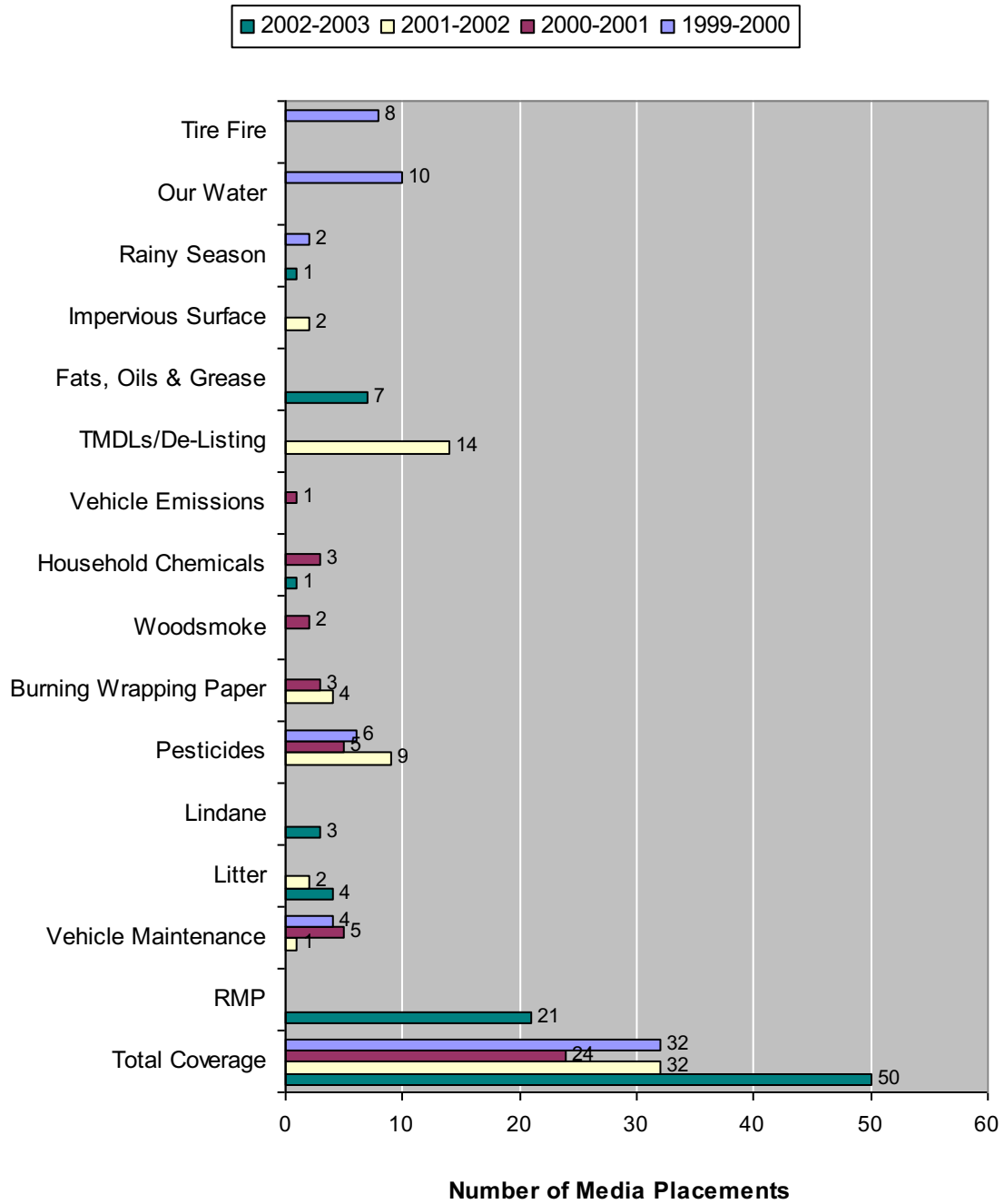


Figure 2. Estimated Dollar Value of Media Coverage

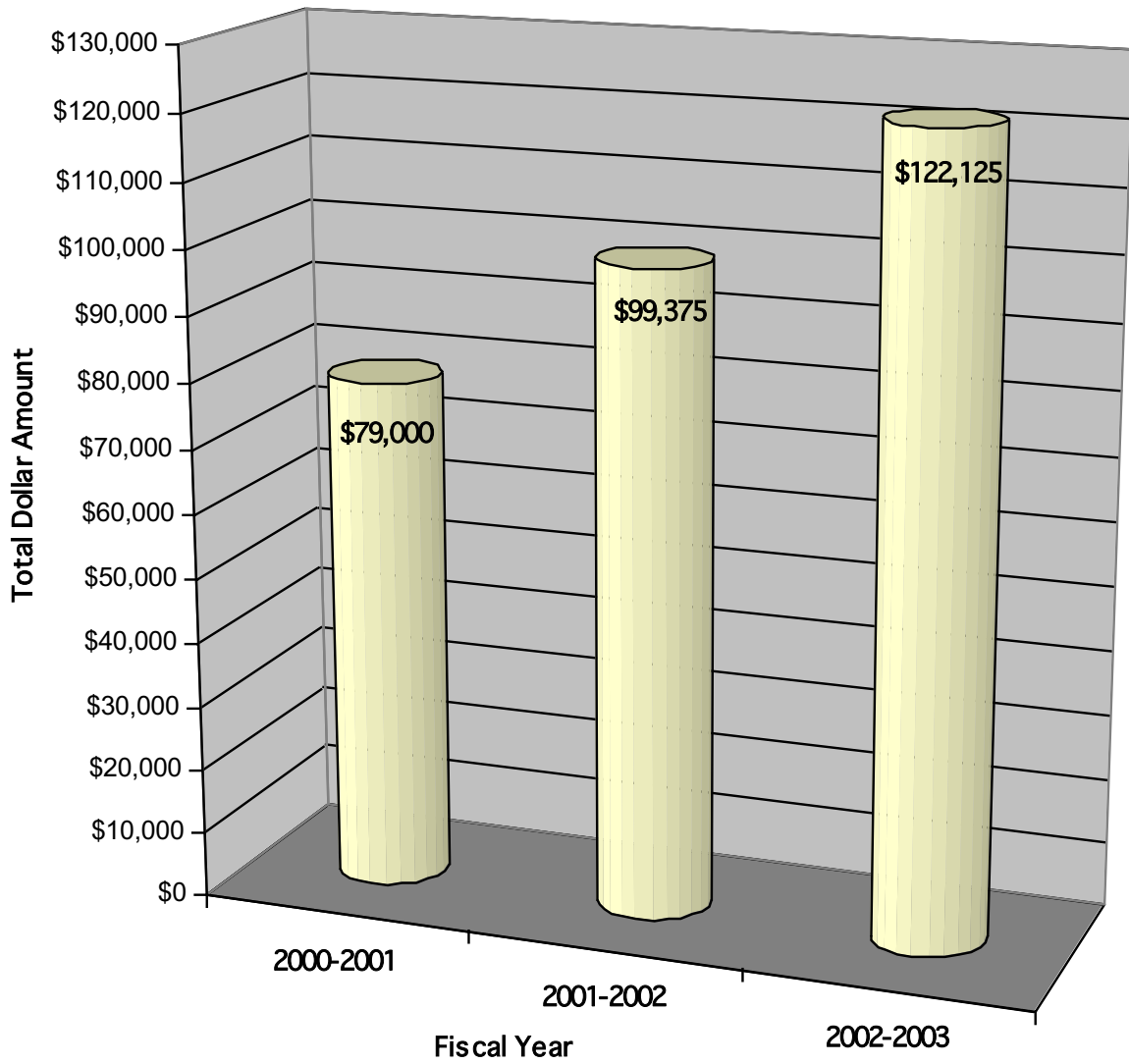
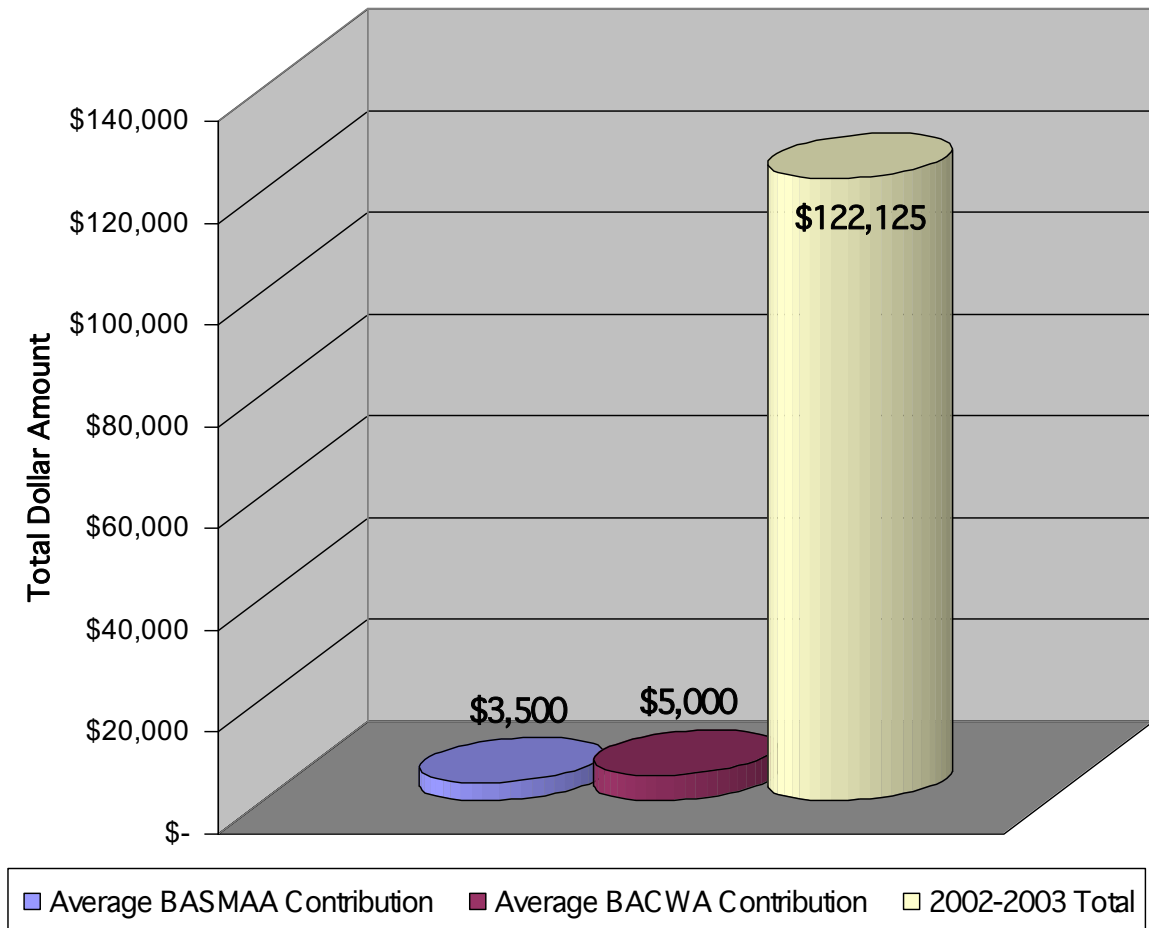


Figure 3. Comparison of Agency Contributions to Value of Media Coverage



* BASMAA members received approximately \$34.00 of coverage for every dollar invested
* BACWA members received approximately \$24.00 of coverage for every dollar invested

Appendix F: Media Survey Report

O'Rorke, Inc.

FY 2002-2003

**Regional Media Relations Campaign
Media Survey Report**

**BAY AREA STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ASSOCIATION
BAY AREA CLEAN WATER AGENCIES**

Prepared by O'Rorke Inc. &
Tucker Environmental Consulting

April 1, 2003

Introduction

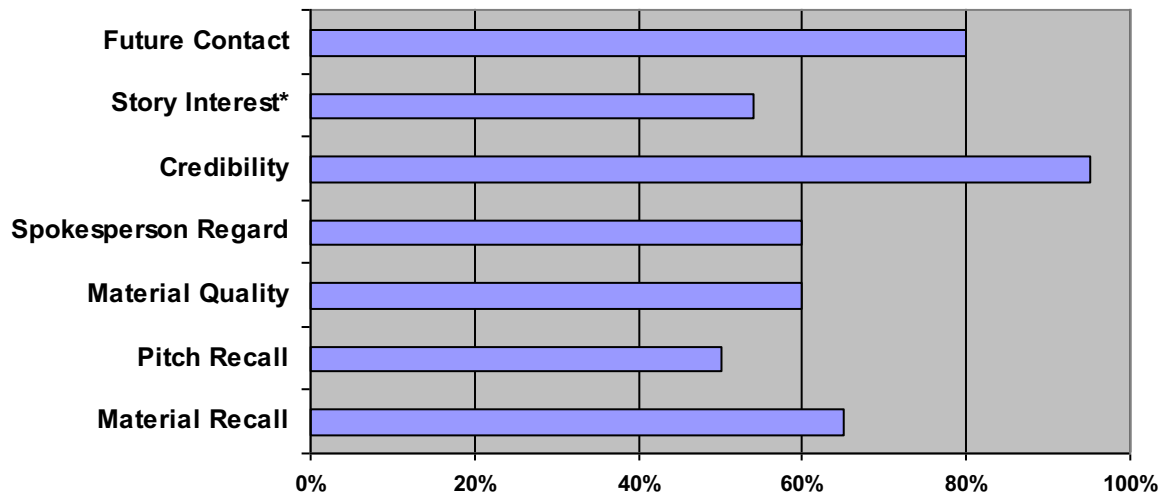
O’Rorke, Inc. conducted a survey of media personnel to evaluate the success of accomplishing a primary goal of the Media Relations Campaign, establishing the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies (BACWA) and the Bay Area Storm Water Management Agencies Association (BASMAA) as media contacts on water quality and pollution prevention issues. It is believed solid, reputable relationships with reporters will generate more press calls and media coverage, which will ultimately raise the public’s awareness of water quality related issues and lead to changes in behavior.

The survey consisted of four questions designed to achieve two objectives:

- ▶ Assess the perceptions of BASMAA/BACWA as media contacts on water quality and pollution prevention issues.
- ▶ Determine recollections and/or impressions of pitches, stories covered, materials received, quality of materials, spokesperson, interest of stories, and how BASMAA and BACWA can improve chances of media coverage in the future.

Major Findings

Survey Response



* Denotes results based on number of respondents who had covered BASMAA/BACWA stories (n=11).

- ▶ Sixty-five percent of the respondents recalled seeing campaign materials, such as press releases and e-mails; slightly less than half recalled a specific pitch.

- ▶ Sixty percent of the respondents gave very high marks for the quality of materials; Likewise, BASMAA/BACWA spokespeople were also highly regarded by 60% of the respondents.
- ▶ Ninety-five percent of those surveyed believed the agencies are a very credible source of information.
- ▶ Fifty-four percent of those surveyed who had covered BASMAA/BACWA stories expressed that the stories are interesting to their audience.
- ▶ Eighty percent of the respondents indicated that they would contact BASMAA/BACWA as a source of information if they were working on a water quality story.

Overall, the responses were positive and the survey provided valuable feedback from media professionals that are contacted most frequently for the Media Relations Campaign. Virtually all those surveyed gave the agencies high marks for credibility and had high regard for BASMAA/BACWA spokespeople. In fact, some respondents even recalled Phil Bobel, Geoff Brosseau and Chuck Weir by name—an excellent sign that the ongoing media relations campaign has created a positive, trustworthy profile for the agencies with the media.

We also learned many things from those media personnel who had not previously covered BASMAA/BACWA stories. First, some reporters' beats are very narrowly defined. Others suggested that we pitch more aggressively like the Bay Area Air Quality Management District does with their "Spare the Air" campaign. This may be problematic since as of yet, there is no equivalent to "Spare the Air" in place for water pollution prevention. Others had helpful tips to offer such as pitching stories closer to the weekend when there is less competition for media attention. It is also important to note that even the reporters who hadn't directly covered stories viewed the agencies as credible sources of information. Those who recalled specific materials believed the materials were of good quality.

Respondents from both categories could also recall specific pitches. Fats, oils and grease was mentioned most frequently probably due to the fact that it occurred fairly recently. However, pesticides, the de-listing of copper and nickel, and mercury were also cited.

Perhaps the most important, though not surprising, finding was that every reporter, editor, producer, and assignment editor requested pitches that are tailored for their specific beat. Of course, this is not always possible (a light story cannot be turned into hard, breaking news), but the reminder is worth taking note in planning the FY 03-04 campaign. Clearly, the campaign should continue pursuing a mix of light feature oriented pitches along with hard news to capitalize on getting the most coverage possible from a variety of sources.

Methodology

In total, twenty media professionals were surveyed between December 2002 and February 2003. Eleven of those surveyed had covered BASMAA/BACWA stories in the past and nine had not. The list of media personnel surveyed is provided in Appendix A. A copy of the survey questions can be found in Appendix B. O'Rourke's staff conducted an informal telephone interview of key media personnel due to resource constraints and the limited availability of media personnel. However, in many cases, after several contact attempts, it was clear that e-mails and faxes were the best route to responses for some of the reporters. This flexibility in mode of information

gathering ultimately allowed the campaign to come away with less scientific but never-the-less very valuable information. The structure of these one-on-one interviews can be viewed, on the whole, as a focus group, which provided the campaign with useful qualitative information.

Question by Question Analysis

Recall of Past Materials

Sixty-five percent of those surveyed recalled seeing campaign materials, such as press releases and e-mails. This is a clear sign that our pitches are effective and media awareness has risen. Not only did the media remember BASMAA/BACWA materials (even when some of the people surveyed receive hundreds of faxes a week), almost half recalled a specific pitch. The pitch most mentioned was fats, oil, and grease, most likely because it was done fairly recently. Still, the respondents mentioned an array of topics, including: pesticides, mercury, the de-listing of copper and nickel, and boat ride offers.

Quality of Materials

The majority of respondents gave very high marks for the quality of materials. They appreciated the materials for a variety of reasons (e.g. timely, easy to read, and informative were some of the reasons given). BASMAA/BACWA spokespeople were also highly regarded by the media. Sixty percent of those surveyed responded positively to both questions. Although forty percent couldn't recall materials or spokespeople, these respondents tended to be media who hadn't previously covered BASMAA/BACWA stories. It is important to note, none of the media outlets, including newspaper, radio, or television perceived the quality of materials to be bad.

Credible Source of Information

For both the media who had and had not covered BASMAA/BACWA stories, ninety-five percent regard BASMAA and BACWA as credible sources of information. This confirms that the campaign has been successful in building BASMAA and BACWA's reputation with the media.

Perceptions of Story Interest

Fifty-four percent of the media who had covered BASMAA/BACWA stories expressed that the stories were interesting and useful to their audience. The majority of those who had not previously covered a story could not comment.

Source of Information Potential

Eighty percent of those surveyed indicated they would contact BASMAA and BACWA as a source of information if they were working on a water quality story. In fact, conducting the survey has helped to keep BASMAA and BACWA's names top in their minds, something that will only be enhanced by the thank you letter and gift scheduled to be mailed in mid-March.

One humorous anecdote that occurred during an interview was that a Home section editor actually believed that she had initiated contact with BASMAA and BACWA on a pesticide story last year, when in fact we had aggressively pitched her. This is an excellent sign that the pitches are highly regarded since some editors want to believe they generated the ideas themselves.

Recommendations for Improving Pitches

Ninety percent of the respondents provided suggestions to BASMAA and BACWA. Some of the suggestions were not applicable and some had already been employed. Some noteworthy comments include:

- ▶ Tom Vacar, Consumer Reporter at KTVU-TV, suggested that the agencies pitch more aggressively like the Bay Area Air Quality Management District does on “Spare the Air” days. Because there is currently no “Spare the Air” mechanism in place for high water pollution days, this presents an opportunity for further investigation.
- ▶ Mike State of Shadow Traffic Radio Newswire suggested that the agencies list spokesperson information and background on a website for easy access by the media.

Twenty-five percent of the respondents indicated that BASMAA and BACWA should proceed as they have been, even if every pitch is not successful all the time. One seasoned assignment editor summed it up best, “Media is a roulette game.” We need to keep pitching for the agencies in order to continue to garner coverage; staying out there is the single best thing the campaign can do.

Recommendations

This survey was conducted to provide a measurement of the campaign’s success in meeting one of its primary goals. The feedback will also allow BASMAA and BACWA to adjust and fine-tune its approach and techniques so that the campaign operates with the maximum possible effectiveness. Based upon the survey responses, the recommendations for enhancing future campaign efforts are:

- ▶ Pitch frequently, and consistent with a reporter’s beat.
- ▶ Whenever possible, make photographs available to feature section editors.
- ▶ Send bi-annual mailings/emails with spokespeople names, contact information and areas of expertise.
- ▶ Place spokespeople contact information and background on the BASMAA and/or BACWA web site for easy media access.
- ▶ Consider timing lighter story pitches closer to the weekend, when there is less competition for broadcast media attention.
- ▶ Continue to hone pitches to be targeted as much as possible to specific media personnel (e.g. home editors vs. environmental reporters).
- ▶ Consider whether a campaign similar to “spare the air” can be developed for water pollution issues.

Appendix A: Media List

Media Who Have Covered B/B Stories

1. Emerald Yeh, Consumer Reporter, KRON-TV
2. Lynette Evans, Home/Food Editor, SF Chronicle
3. Doug Fischer, Environmental Reporter, Oakland Tribune + ANG papers
4. Holly Hayes, Home/Garden Editor, SJ Mercury News
5. Patty Amador, Food/Home/Garden Editor, Fairfield Daily Republic
6. Debby Morse, Columnist, SF Examiner
7. Tom Vacar, Consumer Reporter/Editor, KTVU-TV
8. Julie Shippen, Home Editor, Contra Costa Times
9. Carolyn Jung, Food Editor, San Jose Mercury News
10. John Motroni, Consumer Producer, KGO-AM, KGO-TV
11. Barry Eberling, Environmental, Transportation & Growth Reporter, Fairfield Daily Republic

Media Who Have Been Pitched But Not Covered B/B Stories

1. Kevin McCormack, Health Producer, KRON-TV
2. Tamara Barry, Planning Editor, KRON-TV
3. Dory Culver, Assignment Editor, KCBS-AM
4. Brad Hicks, Consumer Reporter, KNTV-TV (NBC3)
5. Tanya Pamplone, City Editor, SF Examiner
6. Andrea Widener, Science Reporter, Contra Costa Times
7. Cheryl Colopy, Environmental Reporter, KQED-FM
8. Mike State, Assignment Editor, Shadow Traffic Radio Newswire
9. Phil Yost, Editorial Page Editor, San Jose Mercury News

Appendix B: Survey Questions

Opener: Hi, I'm XXX of the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies. We've spoken a few times in the past year. I just wanted to take a minute of your time to ask you four questions that will help us to pitch you more effectively in the coming year.

1. Do you recall receiving any materials or getting pitched on stories from the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies? If so, what do you recall?

2. Do you remember anything about the quality of the materials you received or the spokespeople you interviewed?

3. What is your perception of the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies as:

- ▶ credible sources of information,
- ▶ pitching stories that are interesting to your audience,
- ▶ a potential source of information when you are working on a story?

4. In your opinion, what could the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies do to improve their pitches and chances for media coverage in the future?