

O'Rorke, Inc.

FY 2005-2006

**Regional Media Relations Campaign
Final Report**

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

July 1, 2005 – June 30, 2006

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FY 2005-2006 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. In FY 05-06, the campaign continued to achieve these goals.

The number of media placements rebounded this year, with the most coverage coming from a pitch on a series of pharmaceutical take-back events. The campaign achieved a total of forty story placements.

Media coverage was pursued on six planned pitches: pesticides in urban creeks TMDL,; FOG (fats, oils and grease), burning gift wrap, fluorescent bulb disposal, translation of pesticide fact sheets, and pharmaceutical take-back events. Additionally, the process of working with meteorologists to incorporate water pollution prevention messages into their broadcasts was continued this year. Some placement highlights included greater television coverage this year, including coverage by KTSF-TV and Univision, two of the premier foreign language stations. The campaign was also bolstered by two home section cover stories on the pitch to convince residents to not burn gift wrap during the holiday season. Overall, print coverage was notable this year for being extremely well-rounded in terms of reach to the entire region.

The media contractor also again secured the Bay Area air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) as a partner of the gift wrap pitch, with BAAQMD paying for costs associated with the pitch.

Maintaining good media relationships continued this year, particularly with home and garden section editors. The campaign broke new ground with placements in the Marin Independent Journal and by confirming use of rainy day pollution messages with KGO-TV.

Overall, 37 articles and broadcast stories were covered by the media in FY 05-06, including 14 print articles, 6 television, 12 radio stories, and 5 web stories. There were no wire stories this year. Public service announcements were not pursued this year. (See Appendix A, Press Report.)

O'Rorke estimates the value of the coverage was achieved in FY05-06 to be \$93,950 if placements are viewed in comparison to the cost of advertising with these media outlets. This figure is up from FY04-05. O'Rorke believes this figure would have been even higher if coverage could have been pursued for the BASMAA regional advertising campaign and if the fluorescent bulb story had not been usurped by statewide press efforts. The total value of this year's coverage represents a more than 20% increase over FY 04-05 (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 FY04-05 was \$93,950, each BASMAA member received approximately \$26.00 worth of coverage for every dollar invested in the campaign and each BACWA principal received \$18.00 worth of coverage for every dollar invested. The return was even greater for BACWA's associate members who invested fewer resources to the campaign than BACWA principals.

What follows are recommendations for FY06-07 and a complete report on the accomplishments for the major tasks as outlined in the FY 05-06 scope of work. Appendices include: Press Reports (Appendix A), Budget by Project (Appendix B), Print Articles (Appendix C), Circulation Information for Media Outlets (Appendix D), Comparison of FY03-04, FY04-05, and FY05-06 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, Figure 3).



Recommendations for FY 2006-07

Recommendations for FY06-07 include the following:

- Build BACWA and BASMAA's image as environmental professionals by including themes and messages in pitches that highlight the agencies' accomplishments in protecting water quality, consider developing an op-ed piece focusing on those themes.
- Maintain a strong presence with key reporters and media personnel; continue to pitch good quality stories on a regular basis.
- Discontinue the pursuit of meteorology coverage in FY06-07; this media target has proved very difficult ascertain coverage levels with, despite nearly eighteen months of effort.
- Utilize a calendar of seasonal pitches that will serve as signposts throughout the campaign year.
 - Ensure that the roster of pitches planned for FY 06-07 include a range from lighter, feature stories to those with more news potential for greater placement success.
 - Evaluate campaign success by comparing number of placements and monetary value of media coverage garnered in FY06-07 to media coverage attained in previous years.
 - Continue to seek out partnerships with agencies and organizations who can bring financial resources to the campaign.
 - Determine a few alternate pitch ideas on the FY06-07 workplan to allow agencies to maximize campaign resources even if some planned pitches do not come to fruition.

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 and maintaining relationships with the media continued in FY 05-06. Relationships continued to be advanced in two ways; media relationships were enhanced through the consistent, ongoing presence of the agencies and as a result of the quality of the stories pitched.

In part, media success is a numbers game. A basic fact holds true: the more pitches conducted over time increases the likelihood of more quality media coverage. Media success is also based on the variety of stories pitched. Going to the same beat reporters with great frequency can sometimes hurt a campaign, so the goal for this project has been to conduct a variety of pitches aimed at different media audiences—some to environmental reporters, others to home section editors, others to consumer reporters, to name a few. These rules of thumb have definitely held true for BASMAA/BACWA, as evidenced by the strong media foothold achieved by this campaign in the last six years. A variety of reporters know and respect our spokespeople and are always receptive to hearing our pitches.

To further enhance media relationships, the media contractor conducted very informal surveys of key media during pitches. These informal sessions yielded some key information, most notably that the agencies and spokespeople are respected as sources of information. However, a few reporters did say they wished that more lead time was given in pitches. This was of particular

issue during the pesticides in urban creeks TMDL pitch. Although the timing on that pitch could not be helped because of extenuating circumstances, the media contractor sought to remedy this issue. The pitch on the pharmaceutical take-back events in the spring began well in advance of the actual collection event week and was an immensely successful pitch.

Additionally, as appropriate, thank-you emails 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:

- Weave the agencies' overall message of their extremely positive work on pollution prevention into all media materials, including emails and press releases, as appropriate.
- Send one email focusing on the agencies' accomplishments in order to highlight BASMAA/BACWA as environmental "good guys" in the eyes of the media.
- Pitch good quality stories on a regular basis to maintain a strong presence with key reporters and media personnel.
- Continue to utilize the BACWA and BAYWISE websites as places to post background and contact information on the agencies' key media spokespeople for easy access by media personnel as needed.
- Based on feedback from the media, build-in—as much as possible—ample lead time on more serious stories.

Task B Accomplishments

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

In FY05-06, seven media pitches were included in the workplan. Ultimately, six were pursued for coverage: pesticides in urban creeks TMDL; FOG (fats, oils and grease); fluorescent bulb disposal; gift wrap burning; pharmaceutical take-back events; and translation into Spanish of our Water, Our World fact sheets. Additionally, messages on water pollution during rains were again pitched to television meteorologists. A summary of the coverage attained follows below.

Because this is a regional campaign, one goal is to ensure that the coverage attained reached the Bay Area-wide. This goal was attained, as major stories ran on KCBS-AM and KQED-FM and in the San Francisco Chronicle, San Jose Mercury News, and in the Oakland Tribune. This goal was further achieved by several stories being carried on media websites and by KPIX-TV.

Pesticides in Urban Creeks TMDL

This pitch consisted of working with both agencies and the Clean Estuary Partnership (CEP) to develop talking points for spokespeople and a press release to be distributed only if the draft TMDL was adopted at a RWQCB hearing in November. The significant downside of this pitch was that no pitching was allowed to occur until after the hearing, in case the Board rejected the TMDL or there was other significant controversy. (The talking points were prepared, in part, to be able to react to unsolicited media calls and queries.) The Marin Independent Journal conducted some interviews after the pitch was done, but the story never made it to print; an excellent story was carried on KQED-FM. One media placement was achieved from this pitch.

Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG)

A press release was developed and distributed in time for the holiday season. Although there were many holiday related stories being pitched and a bigger lead time would have helped the effort, this pitch resulted in home section cover stories in both the San Jose Mercury News and the San Francisco Chronicle—the region’s two most prominent, high circulation newspapers. Additionally, from this coverage, web stories were carried. The stories included proper disposal information and quotes from spokesperson Phil Bobel. A total of four placements were achieved from this pitch.

Burning Gift Wrap (Joint pitch with BAAQMD)

The agencies partnered with BAAQMD for a joint pitch that educated the public about why not to burn gift wrap as fire kindling during the holiday season. This story was picked up by television, radio and print. This successful pitch resulted in a total of 16 media placements. (1 web)

Fluorescent Bulb Disposal (new law)

The committee wanted to pursue a story on changes to the Universal Waste Law taking effect in February 2006, focusing on fluorescent bulb disposal. A press release was developed and extensive pitch calls were made, but the State department of Toxic Substances Control had pitched the story heavily, far in advance of the new law taking effect. Further, the media was most interested in the angle of battery disposal. No placements were achieved from this pitch.

Pharmaceutical Take-Back Events

The campaign worked with the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group’s (BAPPG) subcommittee on pharmaceuticals over the course of several months to plan a major pitch on the first ever series of concerted pharmaceutical take-back events in the region. This included developing pitch strategies, a press advisory, a press release, a press event, and three waves of pitch calls. The result was the most successful pitch of the year with stories on KPIX-TV, KTSF-TV, KCBS-AM, and in dailies all over the region, including a major story by the San Francisco Chronicle’s prestigious environmental writer, Jane Kay. In total, 19 media placements were achieved. (2 web)

Pesticides: OWOW Materials in Spanish

As of the report writing, this pitch was still pending but there was interest from the Spanish language station, Telemundo.

Trash/BASMAA Advertising Campaign Pitch

The regional advertising campaign is on hiatus; a new campaign is being planned by the RAC committee for FY 06-07.

Meteorologist Messages

Based on feedback from an informal survey of television meteorologists conducted in FY04-05, several brief messages were crafted to be used as “water pollution alerts” on rainy days. In FY 05-06, this work continued. Meteorology departments were aggressively pursued this year. First, the media contractor issued a reminder email to all meteorology contacts at the start of the rainy season. This was followed-up with phone calls to reiterate the purpose of the alert messages. On rainy days, alert messages were emailed to these contacts. After rainy days, follow-up contact was made to determine whether messages had been used. Although many

contacts had expressed that the messages were worthwhile, confirming use was difficult. However, Joel Bartlett of KGO-TV confirmed that he used the messages in his broadcast on several occasions. This pitch resulted in use of alert messages on KGO-TV.

Breaking News Response

Looking for opportunities to respond to news is an ongoing part of the workplan for this campaign every year. This year, the media contractor identified a few opportunities for news responses, such as letters to the editor. However, the spokespeople for the campaign declined to pursue this opportunities. In some cases, spokespeople directly contacted a reporters about a story in lieu of submitting written responses.

Value of PSAs Placed in FY 05-06

PSA coverage was not pursued in FY05-06.

Value of Media Placements in FY 05-06

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 05-06 is estimated at \$93,950. 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. Thirty-second ads in evening news programs can cost as much as \$2,000 each; however on foreign language stations, prices can be as low as \$300. 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. The mentions we received from meteorologists were also not factored in.

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.

An analysis of the past three 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 FY05-06 showed a sharp increase over the previous year in value of placements, number of overall placements was comparable to FY 04-05. This can be explained by the fact that this year's

placements included no wire stories (for which no comparable advertising value can be determined) but did include ample broadcast coverage.

Total Value of Media Placements in FY 05-06: \$93,950

Task B Recommendations:

- Work closely with the executive directors to craft a pitch strategy to highlight the good work of BASMAA/BACWA in order to set the stage for putting forth the overriding message that the agencies are “environmental good guys.”
- Focus concerted pitches toward ethnic audiences through the use of ethnic media and bilingual spokespeople, as appropriate.
- Include a breaking news component as part of media pitches to allow the campaign flexibility in responding to news events as they occur.
- Identify opportunities to collaborate on media pitches with other partners. BASMAA/BACWA’s ongoing collaborations with the BAAQMD and the RWQCB have proved successful in generating media coverage over the years.
- Include a variety of topics in the FY 06-07 workplan to ensure maximum media interest and placements. The topics should include a range from lighter, feature-oriented stories (fats, oil and grease) to more news-oriented topics (such as TMDLs).
- Work with the committee to ensure, as much as possible, that pitches can be conducted with ample lead time. This is especially true of pitches aimed at environmental writers and feature section writers and editors at the daily newspapers.

APPENDIX A: Press Reports

Pitch	Print	Television	Radio	Web	Wire	Overall Placement
Pesticides in Urban Creeks TMDL November 2005			KQED-FM			1
FOG November 2005	<i>San Francisco Chronicle</i> 11/19/05 "Dieting Goes Down the Drain" <i>San Jose Mercury News</i> 11/24/05 "T-Day Alert: Don't Put Grease in Sink"			Sfgate Mercury News		4
Burning Gift Wrap (with BAAQMD) December 2005	<i>San Mateo County Times</i> 12/24/2005 "I'm Dreaming of a Green Christmas" <i>Oakland Tribune</i> 12/24/2005 "Here Comes Santa Claus – Choking on the Pollution" <i>San Mateo County Times and Alameda Star-Times</i> 12/25/2005 "No Holly, Jolly Christmas for the Environment" <i>Contra Costa Times</i> 12/31/2005 "Indoor and Outdoor – Put Safety First" <i>Marin Independent Journal</i> 12/25/06 "Wrapping Paper not for the Fireplace" <i>Marin Independent Journal</i> 12/29/2005 "Unhealthy Way to Cut Heating Costs"	KTVU-TV KFTY-TV	KCBS-AM: Phil Bobel interview, Ecotalk: 12/22, 12/24, 12/28 KSRO-AM: 12/19 Luna Salaver interview KQED-FM: 12/23	Contra Costa Times		15

<p>Safe Medicine Disposal Day April – May 2006</p>	<p><i>San Francisco Examiner</i> 5/19/06 “Unused Prescription Drugs are Harming the Environment”</p> <p><i>Palo Alto Daily News</i> 5/16/06 article by Dan Velton.</p> <p><i>San Jose Mercury New</i> 5/14/06 “Program aims to keep drugs’ out of the Bay”</p> <p><i>Contra Costa Times</i> 5/14/06 Paul Rogers</p> <p><i>San Francisco Chronicle</i> 5/11/2006 “Don’t Dump Old Medicine in Toilet”</p> <p><i>San Mateo County Times</i> 4/20/06 “Flushed Meds Could Spur a Fishy Situation”</p>	<p>KGO-TV: 5/12/06</p> <p>Univision-14: 5/12/06</p> <p>KPIX-TV: Health Watch 5/9/06</p> <p>KTSF-TV: 5/13/06</p>	<p>KQED-AM: 5/12/2006 interview with Phil Bobel,(2X)</p> <p>KLIV-FM: 5/15/2006 Phil Bobel interviewed</p> <p>KOIT-FM 5/12/06 Information carried</p> <p>KCBS-AM 5/15/2006 Interview with Save Bay representative at collection event (2X)</p>	<p>Sfgate KCBS-AM</p>		<p>17</p>
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APPENDIX B: Budget by Project

Tasks	Amount Spent
ORPR Services General Tasks, Mtg. Attendance, Assist with Project Mgr. Recruitment, Reports, Work Plan Development, Final Report	\$6,539
ORPR Services Designated Pitches	\$21,350
ORPR Services Responses to Breaking News	\$224
Total Amount Spent	\$28,113 (June 30th)
Total Budget	\$37,000
Total Remaining	\$8,887

APPENDIX C: Print Articles

San Francisco Examiner

“ Unused Prescription Drugs are Harming the Environment”

By Jared Blumenfeld and Susan Leal

May 19, 2006

Tylenol. Celebrex. Prozac. Noravir. We know these prescription drug brand names because they have proven so effective in combating human ailments from headaches and arthritis to clinical depression and HIV.

But few of us realize that, as evidence mounts that everything from Advil to Viagra is finding its way into San Francisco Bay and the Pacific Ocean, there is growing concern in the public health, environmental and scientific communities about the impact of these pharmaceuticals on our aquatic environment.

So who's prescribing these drugs for our environment? It turns out that, unintentionally, we all may be.

For years, often at the recommendation of doctors and health professionals, people have disposed of their expired or unwanted over-the-counter medications and prescription drugs by flushing them down the toilet.

But when it comes to pharmaceutical waste, everything that goes down the drain or ends up in the trash eventually ends up back in our environment. Even the most modern wastewater treatment plant is not designed to consistently remove pollutants like pharmaceutical drugs. Drugs thrown into the trash eventually end up in landfills, where drug residues can seep into groundwater.

A study conducted in 2002 by the U.S. Geological Survey sampled 139 streams across 30 states and found that 80 percent had measurable concentrations of compounds such as prescription drugs, non-prescription drugs, steroids and reproductive hormones.

Although the concentrations of most compounds found in the study were low – usually less than one part per billion – scientists have discovered that exposure to even lower levels of pharmaceuticals have had negative effects on fish and other aquatic species, both in the lab and in nature.

The San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Walgreens and the San Francisco Department of the Environment are teaming up with Bay Area wastewater treatment, health and environmental agencies to promote “Safe Medicine Disposal Days” throughout the Bay Area.

Through Sunday, we're educating residents that it's no longer recommended to throw medications in the trash or toilet and encouraging them to bring their expired and unused prescription drugs and other pharmaceuticals to one of more than 35 participating Walgreens stores for safe disposal.

If these efforts prove effective, we will look at establishing year-round pharmaceutical drop-off centers around the Bay Area.

In San Francisco, we're fortunate that our residents already have a year-round option for unwanted or expired pharmaceutical disposal – our Household Hazardous Waste Collection

Facility. Pharmaceuticals collected from San Franciscans during "Safe Medicine Disposal Days" will be transported to this facility for safe disposal. Once collected, they will be transported for incineration through a process that prevents particulate matter and other contaminants from entering the air.

While The City is working hard to keep pharmaceuticals out of our environment, ultimately, it makes the most sense that the people who produce pharmaceuticals take responsibility for their safe disposal. In the long term, we hope to encourage pharmaceutical companies to pay for take-back programs.

Prescription drugs and pharmaceuticals have greatly improved our own health, but they're having a negative impact on marine ecosystems and aquatic life. Our doctors don't prescribe our drugs to the environment. Neither should we.

Contra Costa Times

" Drugs disposed of incorrectly could give Bay bad diagnosis"

By Paul Rogers, KNIGHT RIDDER

May 14, 2006

Finished with that old Advil? Done with the Lipitor? No need for those birth control pills anymore?

Don't flush them or wash them down the drain. They could end up in San Francisco Bay -- and fish and pharmaceuticals don't mix.

That's the message from a coalition of cities and sewage plant operators who are urging Bay Area residents to drop off old prescription and over-the-counter drugs at one of 30 locations for proper disposal.

Through May 21, a select group of Walgreens drug stores, along with senior centers and other community buildings, will accept discarded drugs.

The program is the first widespread effort in the Bay Area to collect unwanted medications to keep them out of sewer systems, said Phil Bobel, Palo Alto's manager of environmental compliance.

"We're finding all kinds of drugs that are showing up in waters of the United States and San Francisco Bay," Bobel said. "It's not a huge problem yet, but it is a scary thing. We've got some time to put procedures in place so we can avoid major problems."

Steroids, antibiotics, anti-depressants, hormones and other compounds are turning up in waterways nationwide. Sewage treatment plants don't filter them out, so they end up in bays and rivers.

Although the compounds are found in tiny quantities, some studies suggest they can harm fish and other animals. In the Potomac River, for example, scientists have found male smallmouth bass that produce both eggs and sperm, a characteristic researchers say could be linked to human drugs.

A 2003 study of San Francisco Bay waters found traces of flame retardants; acetaminophen; musk compounds from perfume and detergents; and DEET, a chemical used in mosquito repellent.

It is unclear if the pollutants, found in parts per trillion, are in large enough concentrations to harm fish, amphibians or other species.

No large-scale studies have been done because of lack of funding, said Daniel Oros, an environmental scientist with the San Francisco Estuary Institute who conducted the 2003 study.

"But if drugs do enter the bay," Oros said, "there is potential for causing harm."

Drugs collected at drop-off sites will be taken to an incinerator. When the drop-off event is over, officials urge people to put old drugs in sealed containers, like plastic bags, and throw them in the trash.

San Jose Mercury News

" Program aims to keep drugs out of the bay"

By Paul Rogers, Mercury News

May 14, 2006

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Contact Paul Rogers at progers@mercurynews.com or (408) 920-5045.

San Francisco Chronicle

“Don’t dump old medicine in toilet”

By Jane Kay, CHRONICLE ENVIRONMENT WRITER

May 11, 2006

The Tylenol, antibiotics, ibuprofen and Prozac that people toss into the toilet or down the drain may be flowing straight to the bay and contaminating fish, warn local sewage treatment officials who want to stop it.

Sewage plant operators who have curtailed everything from industrial waste to household chemicals and pesticides and mercury from dental offices are now trying to reduce pharmaceuticals from homes by offering a safer disposal method for unwanted pills.

The out-of-sight, out-of-mind flush recommended for years doesn't work, say representatives for the 40 agencies that operate sewage plants around San Francisco Bay.

The plants are designed to treat human waste and other biodegradable organic materials -- not the medicines and chemicals in consumer products that make it through treatment and remain in the effluent that spills into the bay or ocean, and in the sludge that is used for landfill cover, incinerated or placed in farmland.

"Some of the pharmaceuticals are definitely making it through sewage treatment plants," said Phil Bobel, manager of the environmental compliance division for the city of Palo Alto and a spokesman for the agencywide Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group.

Studies of fish in waterways near Denver, in Lake Mead and in London's Thames River have found changes in their reproductive systems that apparently are linked to pharmaceuticals that can disrupt the endocrine systems, sewer officials say.

While studies continue on the effects of the drugs on marine life and human health, Bobel said, "There's something simple we can do now to cut down on this stuff. ... Unfortunately, the advice of the past was, 'Dump it down the toilet.' Now we're trying to turn it around: 'Don't dump it down the toilet.' "

The group has organized 30 Bay Area events -- called Safe Medicine Disposal Days -- where people may take unwanted pills, starting Friday and continuing through May 21.

Banners at BART stations in Fremont, Berkeley, 12th Street Oakland, Civic Center San Francisco and Daly City advertise the events. Walgreen's drugstores, some of which are accepting unwanted pills, are distributing flyers. Alta Bates Summit Medical Center in Oakland and other hospitals are passing out information with prescriptions. Newspaper ads and SamTrans buses will carry the message.

The Bay Area events will accept all pharmaceuticals. In the future, sewage treatment districts will develop drop-off programs similar to those for hazardous and electronic waste. Most

plants recommend that consumers put pills in the garbage until there are proper drop-off plans.

The Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts started a "No Drugs Down the Drain" program in March during National Poison Prevention Week. They accept pharmaceuticals except for controlled substances at hazardous-waste drop-off points. If people can't make it to the drop-off points, they ask for disposal in the garbage.

There is no evidence to show that the levels in effluent have any effect on human health. In fact, scientists are just beginning to look at the effects of pharmaceuticals on fish and other aquatic life. No such studies have been done in California.

Some of the best testing for pharmaceuticals in California's effluent comes from Los Angeles and Orange counties.

In surveys last year of effluent treated by the high-quality tertiary method, Southern California officials found detectable levels of ibuprofen; fluoxetine, the generic name for Prozac; and the antibiotics erythromycin, trimethoprim and sulfamethoxazole.

Tests also found low levels of the anti-arthritis drug diclofenac; the mosquito repellent DEET; the anti-cholesterol drug gemfibrozil; triclosan, an antibacterial agent in soap; and anti-seizure drugs.

A big question is how much of the medicines in effluent come from human excretion and how much are from direct disposal.

Ann Heil, supervising engineer for Los Angeles County Sanitation Districts, said she worked up data on the top 10 pharmaceuticals sold in the United States and figured out that about 90 percent of the individual drugs are used up in the body while 10 percent of them are excreted. In other California monitoring studies, the San Francisco Estuary Institute in Oakland published results of monitoring in the bay and delta in 2003 in which researchers detected Tylenol, or acetaminophen, DEET and the sunscreen octyl methoxy cinnamate, as well as plasticizers, fire retardants and herbicides.

"There have been studies throughout the world that have found pharmaceuticals turning up in creeks, rivers and bays," said Jen Jackson, pollution prevention coordinator at East Bay Municipal Utility District who's been working to get people to the throwaway event.

"We're trying to be proactive."

Drug disposal

For more information on the Safe Medicine Disposal Days this month, go to www.baywise.org.

E-mail Jane Kay at jkay@sfchronicle.com.

San Mateo County Times

"Flushed meds could spur a fishy situation"

By Julia Scott, STAFF WRITER

April 20, 2006

REDWOOD CITY -- The view of the Bay is placid from the South Bayside System Authority sewage plant in Redwood Shores. But beneath the surface lurks a mysterious soup of chemicals, some of which could be affecting fish.

Local scientists have long been concerned that a class of drugs found to alter the sex characteristics of fish in other parts of the country could also be present in Bay Area waters, but they have no proof of it so far.

From Chesapeake Bay to the depths of the Potomac, scientists have been discovering that fish exposed to sewage effluent have developed a series of genetic mutations over time. Some male fish developed sexual defects after being exposed to chemicals used in birth control pills. Other fish, exposed to small concentrations of blood pressure medications, experienced thyroid problems or stunted growth.

A 2005 study found some of the same problems in fish caught off the coast of Orange County.

Environmental scientists attribute these effects to endocrine disrupters, a largely unstudied group of synthetic chemicals found in pharmaceuticals that reach the water in sewage effluent after being secreted by humans or flushed down the toilet. Modern sewage systems are not built to clean them out, and they can stay in waterways for years, building up in the tissue of bottom-feeding fish.

No studies have yet been conducted on endocrine disrupters in Bay Area waters, so the extent of their presence is unknown. But local water officials are taking action. They are encouraging residents to get rid of their unwanted or expired drugs by throwing them in the garbage or bringing them to a designated disposal site during the week of May 13-21.

Held locally in Millbrae, Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and Belmont, the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group' Medicine Disposal Days are a first attempt to make residents aware of the dangers the drugs may pose to aquatic life.

There is also the fact that, in San Mateo County, every piece of litter and industrial pollutant that ends up in the streets flows directly to the Bay without being treated.

"We've realized it's an issue, and rather than be reactive, we're being proactive," said Karin North, head of the city of Palo Alto's Environmental Compliance Division.

North heads a Santa Clara County working group on emerging contaminants of concern in the Bay. The issue came to the group's attention over four years ago, but those involved have not made much headway in testing for endocrine disrupters, according to North.

With hundreds of chemicals to choose from, including hormones, antibiotics, pesticides and other industrial pollutants, and no test developed for them, it is difficult to discern which ones pose the greatest threat, said North.

And though no human effects have been documented, "you just don't know," said North.

A standard test for endocrine disrupters, however, is "several years away," said Bobbye Smith, regional science liaison for the Environmental Protection Agency's research and development division.

"The money is being spent to determine which of this enormous amount of chemicals poses the biggest problem," Smith said.

She added that pharmaceuticals would be a difficult class of pollutants to regulate, if it ever came to that; they have never been part of the EPA's responsibility.

The Bay Area's long industrial legacy has left other chemicals, such as animal hormones, commercial-strength pesticides and heavy metals at the bottom of the Bay, according to Rainer Hoenicke, deputy director of the San Francisco Estuary Institute. Samples of mussel and clam tissue taken from the Bay between 1999 and 2001 by the SFEI also revealed

chemicals used in personal care products and detergents. Flame retardants, commonly used to protect couches and carpets, were detected at particularly high levels, said Hoenicke.

Dangerously high levels of mercury, a byproduct of mining activities, have prompted the state government to put up signs on local piers warning fishermen and residents about consuming too many predatory fish.

The results of the SFEI study "(S)howed that the way we manage our waste, the regulatory infrastructure, is inadequate to deal with newer drugs that come into the system, like pharmaceuticals," Hoenicke said.

He added that very few of the known chemicals present in the Bay, other than pesticides such as DDT, have been banned.

By joining the Bay Area Pollution Prevention Group's pharmaceutical-collection program, the South Bayside System Authority hopes to help residents of Belmont, San Carlos, Redwood City and other service areas take action, according to Norman Domingo, the plant's technical services supervisor.

It is an important first step, but there's only so much individual districts can do, North said.

"Even if (the chemicals) are breaking down, there's always something being discharged into the Bay, seven days a week ... and we can't tell people to stop taking their medications," she said.

To find a medicine disposal location near you, visit <http://www.Baywise.org>.

Staff writer Julia Scott covers the coast and the environment. She can be reached at 348-4340 or at jscott@sanmateocountytimes.com.

GRAPHIC: Water quality specialist Sara Sipes runs tests in the South Bayside System Authority waste water treatment plant in Redwood Shores. Officials are urging the public not to throw their prescriptions into the sewer system. Fish exposed to traces of estrogen can develop reproductive problems.

Water quality specialist Lorine Jones runs tests in the South Bayside System Authority waste water treatment plant in Redwood Shores. Officials are urging the public not to throw their prescriptions into the sewer system. Fish exposed to traces of estrogen can develop reproductive problems.

Contra Costa Times

"Indoors & out"

December 31, 2005

PUT SAFETY FIRST

This is a time when many of us are doing a lot of cooking. And while most homeowners own a fire extinguisher, many of the devices are stored so close to the stove that they may not do any good in case of a kitchen fire. The flames from stove fires often prevent homeowners from reaching the extinguisher. Even small grease fires can quickly escalate into something large without clear access to an extinguisher.

And many homeowners seldom or never check the fire extinguisher's pressure gauge, which could lose its charge over time. Homeowners must remember to look at the gauge

periodically to make sure it's fully pressurized.

Seattle insurer PEMCO recommends the following:

Check your fire extinguisher's gauge every 30 days. If you ever need to discharge your extinguisher, be sure to recharge or replace it immediately.

Store your fire extinguisher in the kitchen (but not near the stove), garage, or near a door or exit. That way, if the fire is too big to be put out, you can make a hasty escape.

If you burn wood regularly or burn more than half a cord annually, have your chimney professionally cleaned at least once a year.

Burn only dry, seasoned wood, and burn it as completely as possible. That prevents the buildup of creosote, a black, sticky byproduct that causes about nine out of 10 chimney fires.

Never burn cardboard boxes, wrapping paper, treated wood, particle board, trash or Christmas trees, which build creosote and can spark a chimney fire.

To take the 10-question online poll, visit <http://www.ikeepitclean.org>.

Marin Independent Journal

"Unhealthy way to **cut heating** costs"

By Jack P. Broadbent

December 29, 2005

BURNING WOOD endangers the health of your family and neighbors.

With a nearly 50 percent increase expected in energy bills this winter, wood burning is making a comeback as a heating source. But as more Bay Area residents light up to warm up, they will expose their families and neighbors to harmful air pollution.

Wood smoke contains microscopic particles, known as particulate matter, that lodge deep into the lungs, causing aggravated asthma, chronic bronchitis and lung cancer.

Most health-savvy parents who shield their kids from second-hand cigarette smoke are shocked to learn that a woodburning fireplace can cause decreased lung function in children.

Older family members are also at risk: The American Heart Association reports that particulate pollution can trigger strokes and heart attacks.

Wood burning fires not only impact the loved ones inside your home, they also put your neighbors in jeopardy.

On winter evenings, cold air sinks close to the ground with a layer of warm air above. When there is no wind to disperse the pollutants spewing from residential fireplaces, they become trapped under this lid of air and can build up to unhealthy levels, affecting the entire community.

So what is a consumer [and good neighbor] to do?

The good news is that you can still enjoy a winter fire without endangering the health of your family and neighbors by replacing your old fireplace with a gas model.

Gas fireplaces burn cleaner and provide more heat than traditional fireplaces, which actually draw heated air out of the home through the chimney.

Another option is to purchase an Environmental Protection Agency-certified wood stove or insert.

While not as clean-burning as gas, EPA-certified appliances produce significantly lower emissions than fireplaces and older wood stoves.

You should also refrain from burning wood when the Bay Area Air Quality Management District issues a "Spare the Air Tonight" alert. These advisories are delivered on radio and television and via e-mail AirAlerts when air pollution concentrations are expected to rise to unhealthy levels.

To receive AirAlerts by e-mail, please visit the Web site www.sparetheair.org and sign up.

When you absolutely must burn wood, burn it more efficiently and cleanly by using only seasoned wood [i.e., dried for six to 12 months] and building small, hot fires.

You can also reduce your heating needs by weatherizing your home.

On a broader level, individuals can encourage their local governments to adopt the air district's model wood smoke ordinance, which has been implemented in 39 cities and eight counties in the Bay Area.

The ordinance does not ban woodburning, but instead requires gas fireplaces, pellet stoves or EPA-certified wood stoves in new housing or in the remodeling of fireplaces in existing homes.

All of us want to take good care of our families and neighborhoods. How we choose to heat our homes has a direct impact on this goal.

Next time you think of lighting a wood fire, please consider the dangerous health effects of wood smoke.

Jack P. Broadbent is executive director of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

Marin Independent Journal

"Wrapping paper not for the fireplace"

By Mark Prado

December 25, 2005

Wait! Don't toss that wrapping paper into the fire.

That's the word from local air and water quality agency officials, who say the paper creates noxious fumes.

"While wrapping paper may not readily jump to mind as a water pollutant, it can have a serious impact when burned," said Phil Bobel, spokesman for the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies.

"The fact is that when wrapping paper is burned, particulates and other harmful pollutants are produced. Once in the air, rain carries these pollutants from clouds and off roadways and

other surfaces into waterways."

The inks and metal foils that make the paper look so pretty also make it toxic. Heavy metals, such as lead and chromium, are released into the air when wrapping paper is burned.

Lead and chromium frequently are found in local creeks and San Francisco Bay.

"The paper looks festive, but once you burn it you get harmful emissions and particles in the air," said Luna Salaver, spokeswoman for the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. "And what goes up must come down and it comes down in the ground and can end up in waterways."

While officials are asking residents to recycle paper, they say the best thing is to use less wrapping paper and rely more on creative wrapping and reuse options.

"It's too late for this year, but next year people should keep other options in mind," Salaver said.

The agencies suggest these alternatives to traditional wrapping paper:

- Newspaper comics, which are recyclable.
- Grocery and shopping bags, which can be decorated with colorful stamps and wrapped with exotic bows and flowers.
- Holiday tins filled with treats.
- Cloth napkins or scarves: place your gift in a holiday scarf or napkin and use a bow to hold it together.
- Baskets: Place your gift in a basket and use clear wrap and bright bows.
- Reusable gift bags: Save bags you've received and pass them along.

San Mateo County Times and Alameda Times Star

"No Holly Jolly Christmas for the Earth"

By Julia Scott, STAFF WRITER

December 25, 2005

While families are enjoying a happy, healthy holiday season this month, the environment may not.

Many holiday rituals - from gift-wrapping to lighting a fire in the fireplace - contribute to a large increase in waste and air pollution each year.

The holidays have a major impact on landfills, with household waste increasing 25 percent from Thanksgiving to New Year's Day. Food waste, nonrecyclable gift wrap, shopping bags and discarded Christmas trees are some of the main culprits, said Dianne Anderson, a program coordinator with San Mateo County RecycleWorks.

"If you look at it on a weekly basis, that's 1 million tons a week to the landfills. That's almost equivalent to 300,000 SUVs sitting on a landfill," she said.

People can make their holidays a little greener this year by wrapping gifts creatively in scrap paper and making their own Christmas cards, Anderson said.

Saving used paper and ribbon for next year, and using cloth bags on future shopping trips also will make a big difference.

Eco-friendly gifts also are de rigueur: anything that's long-lasting, wrapped in recyclable packaging (no Styrofoam) and doesn't require disposable batteries.

Energy consumption also spikes at Christmastime. An average household will increase its electricity use by 27 percent during the holiday season, Anderson said. Part of the reason is that the days are shorter, so lights are on longer.

Christmas lights also consume a great deal of energy. Anderson recommended using energy-efficient bulbs next year and turning them off during the day.

Air pollution is another major concern during the holidays.

The extra trips people take in their cars to shop, buy food and visit family take their toll on the environment.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District teamed up with the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies to raise awareness about the problem this winter.

"During the week of Christmas Eve to New Year's Eve, our monitors do record higher elevations of small-particle pollution," said Luna Salavar, a spokeswoman for the district.

The common practice of burning nonrecyclable wrapping paper in a fireplace is particularly dangerous.

"The festive wrap often has metallics and certain inks that, once burned, become toxic," Salavar said.

"We would recommend that people pay attention to the air-alert status on our Web site, <http://www.sparetheair.org>, and car pool as much as you can," she said.

For more information, visit <http://www.recycleworks.org> or <http://www.greengiftguide.com>.

Oakland Tribune

"Here comes Santa Claus - choking on the pollution"

By Julia Scott, STAFF WRITER

December 24, 2005

While families are enjoying a happy, healthy holiday season this month, the environment may not.

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San Jose Mercury News

"Holiday grease get the rub"

By Dan Reed, Mercury News

November 24, 2005

Holiday grease: It's not just for clogging your arteries.

No, it also presents a lurking, subterranean evil. And the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies issued a Thanksgiving alert to local homeowners.

It goes like this: ``By properly disposing of fats, oils and grease this holiday season you can

keep your plumbing and public sewers free from blockages and overflows."

OK, so it's not exactly like an orange alert from the Department of Homeland Security. But this is the kind of thing one worries about during the holidays if one works with sewage.

Ken Torke works with sewage. He's the environmental control program manager for the agencies, which are an association of sewage treatment plants.

Torke acknowledges that tree roots probably do the most damage to pipes. But grease is right up there.

``If you've already got a problem with a tree root, say, this could be the last straw," he said.

The main problem is putting hot greases -- for example, from bacon or turkey -- down the kitchen sink. ``If they're hot in the kitchen, they'll cool down and congeal in the pipe," he said.

The fat builds up in the pipe, and can cause sewage to backup into a drain inside the homeowner's house, such as in the shower.

Which would be icky.

Torke admits the fats-in-the-pipes problem isn't really all that much worse during the holidays. But the agencies figured -- what the hell -- if they pitched it as a holiday story, maybe some newspaper would bite.

We bit.

``It's an ongoing everyday problem," he said. ``This was our chance to make a point about it."

So, what should responsible, grease-producing cooks do with their grease? This is what the press release tells us:

Do not put dairy products, fats, oil, grease or greasy foods down the garbage disposal or drain.

Freeze small amounts of fats and grease in a container with a tight-sealing lid and dispose of it in a trash receptacle.

Mix cooking oil with an absorbent material such as cat litter or coffee grounds; place it in a lidded container and dispose of it in a trash receptacle.

For greasy pans that need to be soaked, first pour off the grease into a container as mentioned above. Then place a paper towel over the drain basket to catch grease and food particles as you pour the soaking water down the drain.

For large quantities of cooking oil and other fats (such as from turkey deep fryers), call your local household hazardous waste collection facility or sewage treatment plant for guidance on disposal.

To find a complete listing of fat take-back events in the Bay Area, go to www.bacwa.org. Contact Dan Reed at dreed@mercurynews.com or (408) 920-5771.

San Francisco Chronicle

"Dieting goes down the drain"

By Lynette Evans

November 19, 2005

No one diets at Thanksgiving. Isn't done; shouldn't be done. Americans' one holiday with no political, and few religious, minefields for assembled family and guests to navigate, Thanksgiving is about food -- maybe also football.

With heaping platters of turkey and gravy and stuffing and mashed potatoes and candied yams and pies awaiting us, Thursday will truly be the day when our normally well-intentioned diets go down the drain.

A lot of other things will be going down the drain that day as well, which is why the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies have come out with their yearly caveat, in which spokesman Phil Bobel says: "You never think that the turkey dinner or the batch of french fries you make will affect anything other than your waistline." But all that fat that's not good for us to eat is not good for sewer systems, either, he says. Grease and gravy can build up in pipes and cause blockages and overflows -- not so life-threatening as blocking your arteries but nasty nevertheless. Like your doctor, the Clean Water people are concerned that the increased fat from holiday feasting will end up where it doesn't belong.

Here are their recommendations (along with some of my own in parentheses):

"Do not put dairy products, fats, oil, grease or greasy foods down the garbage disposal or drain." (Most of this stuff probably shouldn't go in your mouth, either, but better to eat and enjoy than clog the sink.)

"Freeze small amounts of fat ... and dispose of it in a trash receptacle." (Just don't forget it in the freezer or, come spring, you'll end up serving it as gravy on the mystery meat you brought home in a doggie bag after the last Table for Six mixer.)

"Mix cooking oil with an absorbent material such as cat litter or coffee grounds ... and dispose of it in a trash receptacle." (Don't just dump the turkey fryer into the cat box!)

"For greasy pans that need to be soaked, first pour off the grease into a container. ... Then place a paper towel over the drain basket to catch grease and food particles as you pour the soaking water down the drain." (Frankly, the paper towel seems a little excessive to me, though I'd say not to put potato peelings through the disposer, either. Even chewed up, they can glue themselves to the drain pipe, as happened at my house one Thanksgiving, leaving us with a houseful of guests and a sinkful of undrained water. Not pleasant.)

You got a turkey fryer? You're going to need to "call your local household hazardous waste collection facility or sewage treatment plant for guidance on disposal."

Or go to www.bacwa.org and click on "documents and notices." (Talk about weapons of mass destruction: The words "hazardous waste facility" ought to be a clue to what you've just been eating.)

Oh, and have a happy Thanksgiving.

E-mail Lynette Evans at levans@sfchronicle.com.

APPENDIX D: Circulation & Average Audience Size Information

Radio

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

KCBS-AM	=901,000
KQED-FM	= 598,000
KSRO-AM	=36,000

Print

Average circulation for the following Bay Area newspapers:

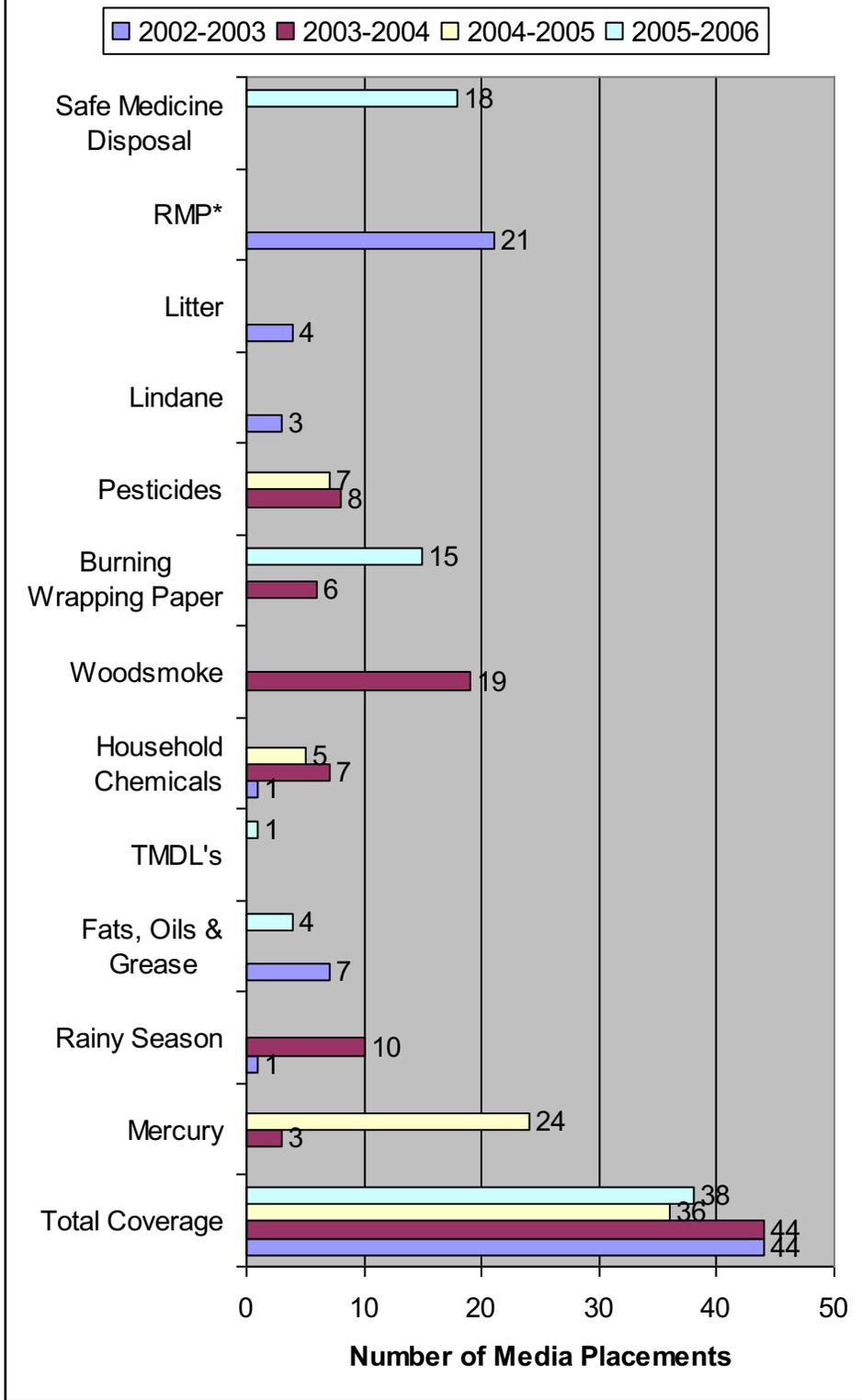
Alameda Times Star	=7,300
The Argus	=31,873
Daily Review	=37,000
Fairfield Daily Republic	=21,465
Marin Independent Journal	=40,267
Oakland Tribune	=67,308
San Francisco Chronicle	=527,466
San Jose Mercury News	=283,757
San Mateo County Times	=34,331
Tri-Valley Herald	=33,535

Internet

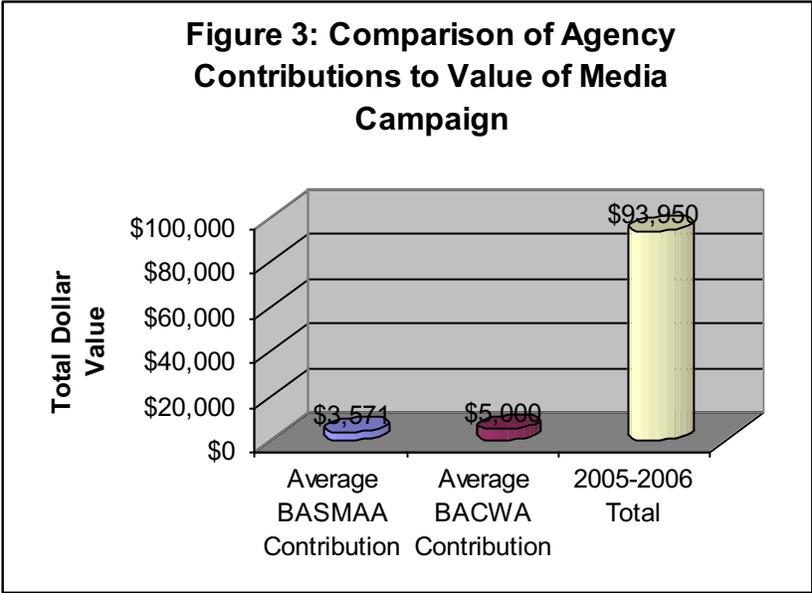
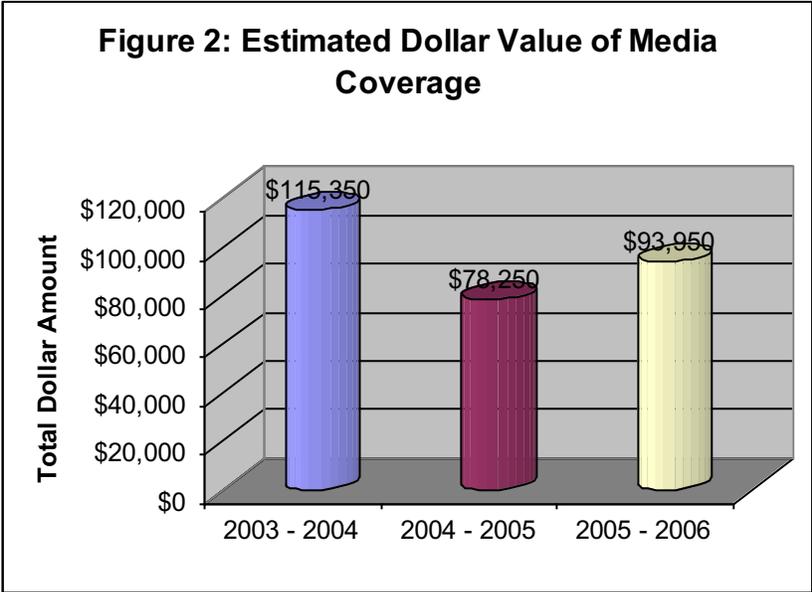
Average page views per month for the following websites:

Alameda Times Star	=149,000 page views per month
The Argus	=253,000 page views per month
Daily Review	=180,000 page views per month
KCBS-AM	=3 Million page views per month
Oakland Tribune	=1,494,000 Million page view per month
San Francisco Chronicle	=64 Million page views per month
San Mateo County Times	=277,000 page views per month
Tri Valley Herald	=216,000 page views per month

Figure 1: Comparison of Media Placements



*Regional Monitoring Program



* BASMAA members received approximately \$29.00 of coverage for every dollar invested
 * BACWA members received approximately \$20.00 of coverage for every dollar invested