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## **FY 2008-2009 Regional Media Relations Campaign**

### **Executive Summary**

The BASMAA/BACWA regional media relations campaign was markedly different during FY 08-09, as compared to previous years.

The project manager and media relations contractor were asked to not pitch media during the first half of the fiscal year, but to instead focus efforts on working directly with the agencies' Executive Directors and boards to determine workplan tasks for the year and to guide overall direction in the years to come. An interim workplan was developed for the first half of the year with this focus; based on these findings a workplan for the remainder of the year was developed and implemented.

The brief report that follows will summarize both workplans and tasks accomplished during FY 08-09. Highlights include development of several media materials and news responses.

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### **Interim Workplan for First Half of FY 08-09**

In the interim workplan, the media contractor and project manager put together a plan for garnering significant input from each Executive Director and from the respective BASMAA and BACWA Boards and Committee Chairs.

This process began in earnest in the early fall and included:

- Telephone interviews with each BACWA Committee Chair
- Participation in a BASMAA Board meeting
- Ongoing conversations and emails with both Executive Directors

Utilizing the feedback from these efforts, the media contractor and project manager developed a workplan for the remainder of the fiscal year. During this interim period, the campaign provided media support to BAPPG's thermometer project. Additionally, in

July 2008, O’Rorke drafted and distributed PSAs focusing on pollution prevention for car washing, which were picked up by radio and associated websites. While promoting car wash facilities as the most environmentally-friendly option, the PSAs also offered residents tips on how they can wash their cars safely at home and information about where the water goes once it leaves the driveway. In September 2008, O’Rorke supplemented the statewide No Drugs Down the Drain effort in the Bay Area by placing calendar/events listings in all Bay Area dailies with appropriate collection event information. This information does not appear in the Media Appendix because use of the listings could not be corroborated. More information on the above items, with the exception of the No Drugs Down the Drain Week materials, is contained in the Media Appendix.

With approval from the Executive Directors, the remainder workplan was underway by January 2009.

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## **Elements of Remainder of Year Workplan**

The workplan for the second half of the fiscal year focused heavily on materials development. It included:

- Development of “reference cards” to be used by spokespeople and local programs in media interviews. The agreed upon topics for these cards were: sanitary sewer overflows, biosolids, recycled water, and the municipal regional permit (MRP). As of this writing, three reference sheets were developed. The SSO and recycled water reference sheets are awaiting distribution by the respective BACWA Committee Chairs, and the biosolids reference sheet is under review by the Project Manager. The sheet on the MRP will be developed in FY 09-10, pending direction of that effort.
- Development of statement on fish kills/creek spills for use by BASMAA.
- Development of media protocol for BASMAA member agencies and local programs.

In this time period, the campaign also responded to news stories, including an SSO in February. This proactive breaking news response pitch resulted in television coverage. The campaign also drafted and submitted letters to the editor on sewer infrastructure repairs. Finally, the campaign assisted in revising materials and pitching a story on mercury reduction for BACWA; this story was mentioned by the San Francisco Chronicle’s renowned outdoors writer, Tom Stienstra. This mention ran in print and online at [sfgate.com](http://sfgate.com)

A full coverage report is attached.

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## **Recommendations for FY 09-10**

The discovery process of FY 08-09 has significantly informed the workplan developed for FY 09-10. The key topics that emerged from those efforts are highlighted in the new workplan. In this coming year we recommend the following:

- Finishing reference materials, speaking points for local programs.
- Continuing to follow breaking news for response opportunities.
- Pursuing coverage on key topics for BASMAA and BACWA, including: SSOs, recycled water, biosolids, the MRP, litter, and pharmaceuticals.