



BAY AREA  
AIR QUALITY  
MANAGEMENT  
DISTRICT

# **Making a Positive Connection with the Media**

**Karen M. Schkolnick**

Air Quality Program Manager/Spokesperson

# Why Care about the Media?

“There is a terrific disadvantage in not having the abrasive quality of the press applied to you daily. Even though we never like it, and even though we wish they didn't write it, and even though we disapprove, there isn't any doubt that we could not do the job at all in a free society without a very, very active press.”

--President John F. Kennedy

*News is any new information or information on current events which is presented by print, broadcast, Internet, or word of mouth to a third party or mass audience - Wikipedia*

- Media is how most people get their news
- Media provides an opportunity to positively influence public opinion and to promote environmental health



# News Happens...

“Whoever controls the media--the images--controls the culture.”  
--Allen Ginsberg

- Because of You

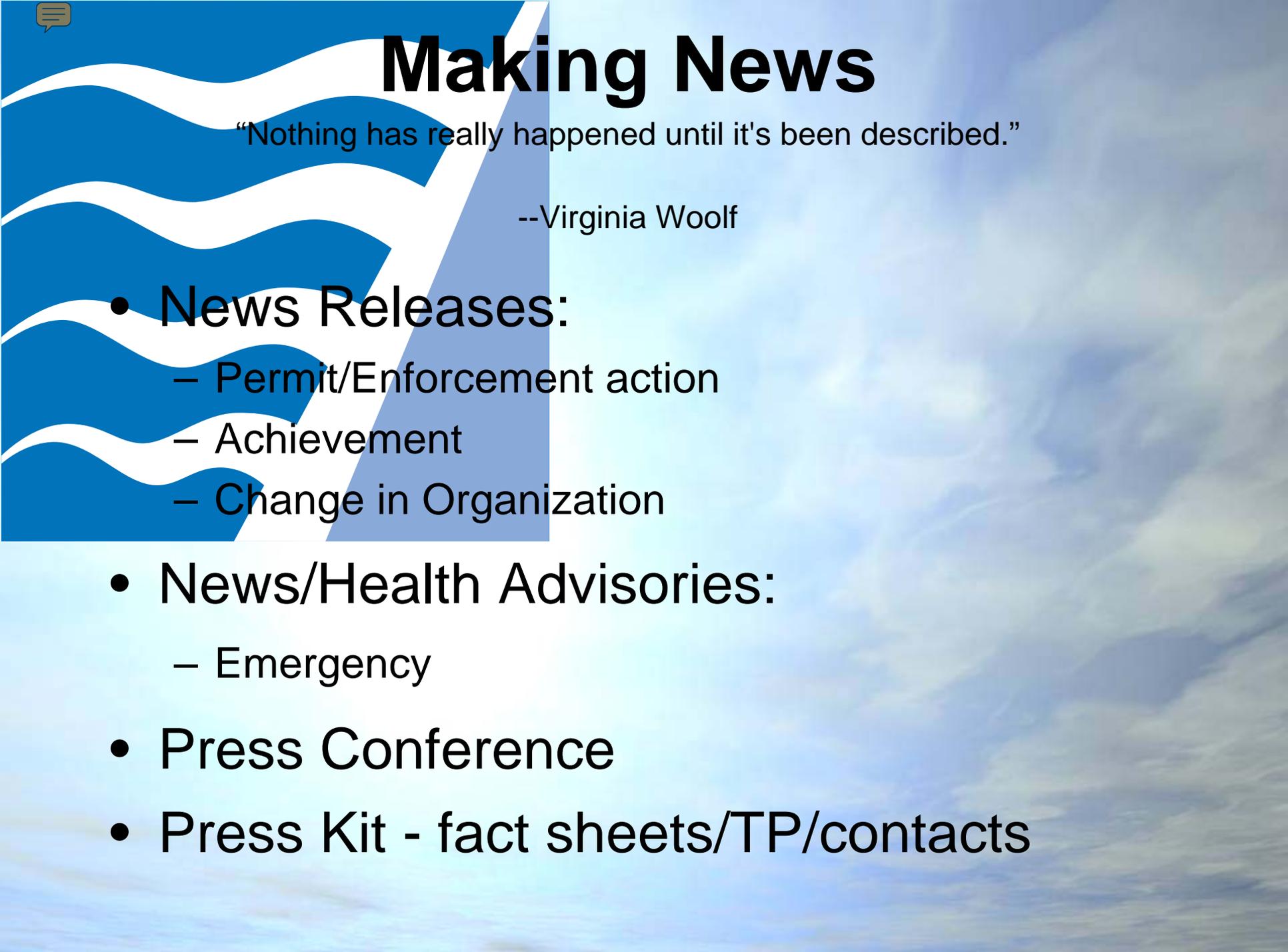
- Proactive

- Around You

- Connect-the-Dots - Nonfeasance - Absence

- At You

- Reactive



# Making News

“Nothing has really happened until it's been described.”

--Virginia Woolf

- **News Releases:**
  - Permit/Enforcement action
  - Achievement
  - Change in Organization
- **News/Health Advisories:**
  - Emergency
- **Press Conference**
- **Press Kit - fact sheets/TP/contacts**



# Making News

## Media Relations Plan

“There are only two forces that can carry light to all the corners of the globe... the sun in the heavens and the Associated Press down here.”

--Mark Twain

- Develop a crisis communications plan that includes dealing with the media and the community
- Assign a media contact and back ups
- Prepare media kits
- Practice implementing your media communications plan



# Media - Opportunities

“Information is the currency of democracy.”

--Thomas Jefferson

- Daily News
- Public Affairs
- Management Editorials/Op-Ed
- Special Programs
- Entertainment Programming
- Public Service Announcements (PSAs)
- Community Calendar Announcements

# Is it Newsworthy?

“Our job is only to hold up the mirror --  
to tell and show the public what has happened.”

--Walter Cronkite

- Timing
- Significance
- Proximity
- Prominence
- Human Interest



# NEWS

For Immediate Release  
July 19, 2007

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## Bay Area Air District Approves Refinery Flare Minimization Plans

*Air District's Rule is the first of its kind in the nation to reduce flaring*

San Francisco, Calif. – The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (Air District) announced today that it has approved Flare Minimization Plans prepared by the five Bay Area petroleum refineries subject to the Air District's Regulation 12, Rule 12, Flares at Petroleum Refineries. The rule, adopted on July 20, 2005, seeks to reduce emissions at petroleum refineries by minimizing the frequency and magnitude of flaring. It prohibits the non-emergency use of a refinery flare unless that use is consistent with an approved Flare Minimization Plan ("Plan"). The rule is structured to capture reductions previously realized by the refineries, and requires petroleum refineries to identify and implement all feasible prevention measures to further minimize flaring in a continuous improvement process.

"This is a true success story," said Air District Executive Officer, Jack P. Broadbent. "This effort has been many years in the making and has already yielded positive results. We've obtained commitments from each of the refineries to make capital and operational improvements to ensure that they eliminate unnecessary flaring. Over time, this regulation will continue to further improve air quality in the communities nearest the refineries and throughout our region."

Refinery flares are first and foremost safety devices intended to protect the safety of refinery workers and the public and the integrity of the refinery. For this reason, Regulation 12, Rule 12 gives refineries flexibility to develop a Plan specific to the unique design and operation of each facility. The regulation specifically allows flaring in emergency situations if necessary to prevent accident, hazard, or release of dangerous gasses directly into the atmosphere.

This rule is the first of its kind in the nation to reduce flaring at refineries. In order to obtain approval by the District, the refineries had to demonstrate in their Plans that every feasible prevention measure not already undertaken will be implemented expeditiously. Examples of prevention measures include installation of additional flare gas recovery compressors and balancing refinery operations to prevent flaring. With this approval, the prevention measures in the Plans are enforceable regulatory requirements.

Emissions from refinery flares are currently estimated at 1.0 ton per day of total organic compounds (TOC) and 0.65 tons per day of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>). These emission levels reflect significant reductions resulting from actions taken by the Bay Area refineries in recent years.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District is the public agency chartered with regulating stationary sources of air pollution in the nine Bay Area counties.

#####

# Proactive Release

## Contact Info

- Organization name
- Contact name
- Phone number
- Logo

## Headline & Body

WHO

WHAT

WHY

WHERE

WHEN

& HOW

## Quotes

Photo *(Optional)*

Notes to Editors  
*(Optional)*

# News May Happen without You...

"A journalist is a grumbler, a censorer, a giver of advice, a regent of sovereigns, a tutor of nations. Four hostile newspapers are more to be feared than a thousand bayonets."

--Napoléon Bonaparte

"If you keep your mouth shut you will never put your foot in it."

--Austin O'Malley

"The most ominous of fallacies--

the belief that things can be kept static by inaction."

--Freya Star



# Reacting to News

"Writing for a newspaper is like running a revolutionary war.  
You go to battle not when you are ready, but when action offers itself."

--Norman Mailer

- **News Releases:**
  - Permit/Enforcement action
  - Achievement
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# News is an Iterative Process

"It ain't over till it's over."

--Yogi Berra

- Be Prepared
- Check-In:
  - Who is “Incident Commander - Spokesperson”
  - Provide Spokesperson with:
    - Who, What, Why, When, and Hows
    - Written documentation, links, references
- Circle Back:
  - Report Media Interactions
  - Track Media Coverage
  - Improve plan accordingly to for next encounter

For Immediate Release  
September 6, 2007

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*Advisory in Effect until Further Notice*

### **Air District Warns Public about Smoke Exposure due to Wildfires**

Elevated levels of particulate matter (PM) caused by smoke from two large Northern California wildfires are impacting air quality in the region. The "Moonlight" fire in Plumas National Forest in Plumas County near Greenville and the "Lick" fire in Henry Coe State Park near Morgan Hill are affecting air quality conditions in Alameda, Contra Costa, Napa, Solano, and Santa Clara counties.

Wildfires are naturally occurring and common this time of year when the humidity is low and a large amount of vegetation has accumulated in wooded areas. Although the highest PM levels in the Bay Area are normally recorded during the winter months, localized events such as these wildfires may elevate PM levels in certain areas. The Air District has received numerous calls from the public and from schools regarding potential health impacts.

"It's prudent to take precautions if your area is being affected by the fire," said Jack Broadbent, the Air District's Executive Officer. "If it's smoky outside, keep your windows and doors closed. To minimize your exposure, it's wise to stay indoors," Broadbent said. Residents who see or smell smoke should consider taking these precautionary measures:

- Keep windows and doors closed as much as possible
- Use the recycle or re-circulate mode on the air conditioner in your home or car
- Postpone outdoor activities, particularly those involving prolonged exertion

Children, seniors and those with respiratory problems such as asthma are most susceptible to health problems due to high particulate levels. Smoke can irritate the eyes and airways, causing coughing, a scratchy throat and irritated sinuses. Persons experiencing severe symptoms should seek professional medical advice or treatment.

Residents are asked to pay attention to health advisories that may be issued by local County Health Officers in the event of a threat to public health due to excessive smoke in their communities.

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# Reactive Release

- Challenge
  - Shortened review period
  - Greater reliance on boilerplate language
- Opportunity
  - Connect-the-Dots
  - Promote environmental health

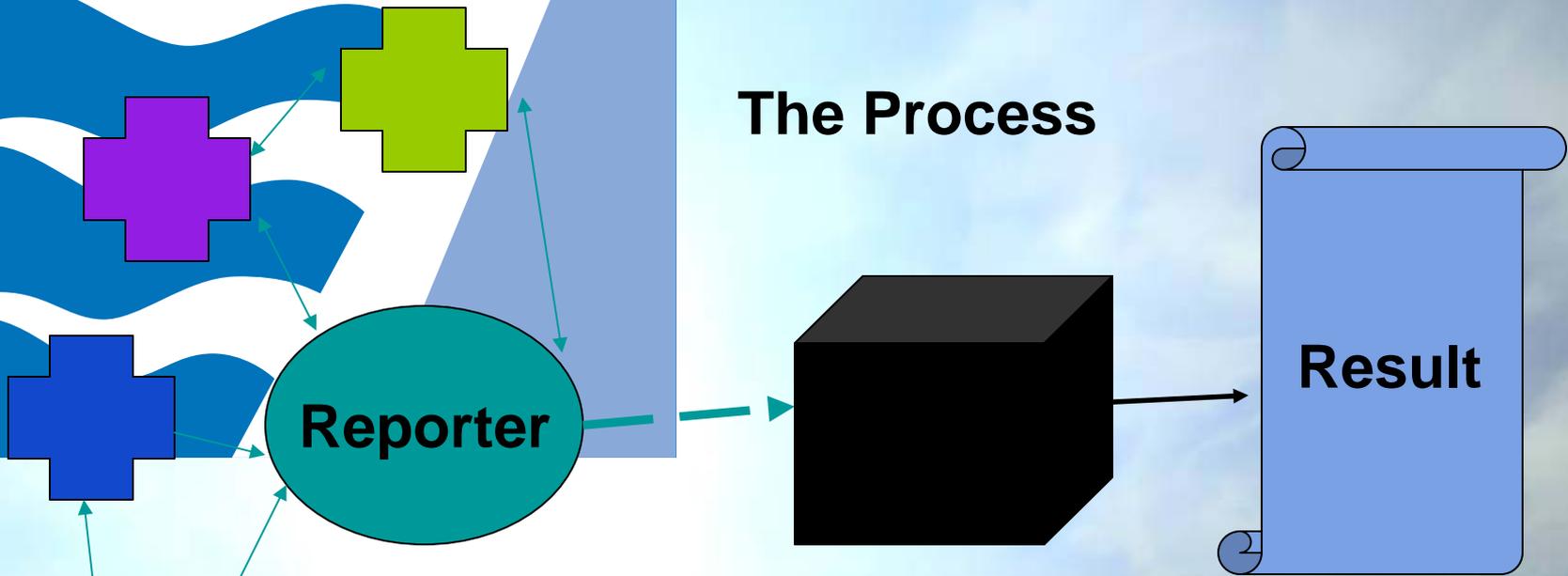
# The Reporter's Perspective

“We've uncovered some embarrassing ancestors in the not-too-distant past. Some horse thieves, and some people killed on Saturday nights. One of my relatives, unfortunately, was even in the newspaper business.”

--President Jimmy Carter

- Competing for news stories
- Little control over final work product
- Under great pressure to meet deadlines
- Stories air with little or no time for preparation
- Challenging working conditions...
  - Noisy newsroom
  - Distractions from the public
  - Exposure to dangerous/hazardous working conditions

# News Production Process



**Key:**

**Information** →

**Sources** ⊕

# News Production Process

“You (reporters) should have printed what he meant, not what he said.”  
-- Earl Bush, press aide to Chicago Mayor Richard Daley

	Pre-Interview	Interview	Airtime
Print	N/A	5 minutes - 2 hours	1 - 3 sentences
Radio	2 minutes	3 - 10 minutes	5 seconds - 3 minutes
TV	2 minutes	5 - 20 minutes + “b-roll”	5 - 10 seconds

# Don'ts

"Never argue with people who buy ink by the gallon."

--Tommy Lasorda

- Don't do an interview unless you feel comfortable with the issue, you know the facts, and have authorization to do so
- Don't say anything you don't want to see on the air or in print
- Don't use jargon
- Don't say "no comment"
- Don't lie, speculate, or give your opinion
- Don't ask to see the story before it goes to press

# Do's

"If Thomas Edison invented electric light today, Dan Rather would report it on CBS News as, 'Candle making industry threatened'".

--Newt Gingrich

- Stay on message
- Take time to think
- Use sound bites
- Use examples
- Offer documents, charts or other background information
- Be sincere, courteous and professional

# Successful Interview

“Wooing the press is an exercise roughly akin to picnicking with a tiger. You might enjoy the meal, but the tiger always eats last.”

--Maureen Dowd

- Understand reporter's perspective
- Identify Ledes & Hooks
- Connect-the-Dots
- Provide appropriate referrals
- Respect a reporter's deadline



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**Public Information**

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