



**[SAMPLE] PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT**

run until [fill in day of event here]

**Citizens' groups to celebrate World Water Day**

Are you concerned about the increasing pressure to export Canadian water to the United States? Are you concerned about water privatization, the quality of drinking water or the pollution of lakes and rivers in Canada?

Find out how you can get involved in promoting a national water policy to help address these issues.

The [your city] chapter of the Council of Canadians will be hosting a public forum/rally/event on [date] to help inform people about Canada's water issues and the need for a national water policy. The event starts at [time], at the [venue]. Admission is free.

For more information contact [name] at [phone number].

**Tips for public service announcements**

Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are a way to get your message out on radio or television. Most local electronic media outlets have a community calendar or designated time for event announcements. They can be helpful for getting people out to your event, but there is no guarantee they will be used, so don't rely on them entirely. They are only one of your outreach and publicity tools. PSAs should be written in a way that you would imagine them read live on-air — they are a script rather than a press release. Make sure to include the "who, what, where, when and how as well as contact information that you're willing to have broadcast.

**[SAMPLE] MEDIA ADVISORY - [Date]**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Citizens' group to host World Water Day event**

The [your city] chapter of the Council of Canadians is holding a rally/public forum/film screening to raise awareness about the need for a national water policy.

**WHO:** The [your city] chapter of the Council of Canadians

[include short bios of speakers if applicable]

**WHAT:** A public forum/rally/march that engages local residents on water issues.

**WHEN:** [date and time of event]

**WHERE:** [venue]

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For more information, or to arrange an interview in advance, contact [your contact info].

**Tips for media advisories**

If you choose to open your event to the media, you could send a media advisory. Use your judgment as to when or whether to send this out. It could be as early as two or three weeks before your event, or as late as a few days before your event, depending on the nature of the media outlets you send it to (weekly publications need more lead-time, for example). In any case, the follow-up calls are crucial to getting journalists' attention. Make sure your contact is available when reporters call or, if you do miss a call, return any messages from journalists as promptly as possible.

**[SAMPLE] PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[Date]

**The Council of Canadians makes a splash on World Water Day**

[your community]- The [your city] chapter of The Council of Canadians is inviting residents to soak up some information on local water issues at a rally/public forum/film night on [date].

"World Water Day is an important day to remind people about the importance of water and the need for access to safe, clean, publicly-provided water," said Jane Activist, a long-time resident of [your community]. "There is increasing pressure on Canada to export water to the United States under the Security and Prosperity Partnership of North America - an agreement between Canada, the United States and Mexico that would give corporations from all three countries greater access to natural resources throughout the continent."

The event will raise awareness on the need for a National Water Policy that would place the public interest and the environment above corporate interests.

The public is invited to participate. Admission is free.

There will be a photo opportunity at [time]. Describe photo op.

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For more information contact [name] and [phone number].

## Tips for press releases

Keep in mind when you write your release what makes a story newsworthy: dramatic human interest, controversy, local angles, calendar tie-ins and major events, to name a few. In terms of timing, think about what your goal is. If the goal is to get people out to your event, you should send your press release at least one week in advance. This will give reporters time to do an advance story. If it is to raise awareness about the issue, a couple of days in advance should be sufficient.

Follow-up calls to reporters, or “pitching” can help you get in the news. Reporters receive dozens of press releases a day, and your call can help make your event stand out from the pack. It’s not always easy, though. Take some time before you call to formulate your thoughts.

These tips will help you get your message across:

- **Target your reporter.** Your best bet is to call reporters you know, or have worked with in the past. If they can’t cover the story, they’ll likely refer you to someone else.
- **Be timely.** Do not call reporters when you know they are on deadline. Mid-morning and early afternoon are good times to make pitches. If they sound rushed, offer to call back later. If you get the answering machine, leave the basics and call back at a better time.
- **Hooks galore.** What makes a story newsworthy? Again, it’s dramatic human interest, controversy, local angles, calendar tie-ins and major events. Be sure to let the reporter know if there is a photo opportunity at the event – they may be interested in coming out for this.