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# Effective Practices for Implementing Local Climate and Energy Programs:

## *Testimonial Videos*

**Lessons Learned *by* Communities *for* Communities**

*The views expressed in this document are those of the Climate Showcase Communities grant recipients. U.S. EPA does not endorse any products or commercial services mentioned.*

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### WHAT IS IT?

Testimonial videos communicate to your target audience from the perspective of "someone like them" who has participated in program activities and can speak to the benefits and motivations of the activities your program is promoting.

### WHY DO IT?

- Testimonial videos add credibility to programs and reinforce program messages.
- Videos can tell a complex story in a short time.
- Videos can go viral on the Web and be used for months or years.
- Videos can connect with new groups by featuring some of their members.
- Videos can effectively convey brand and personality beyond just "the numbers."

### WHAT WORKS?

- Have a story to tell and make it short, sweet, and fun.
- Be interesting and inspiring.
- Focus on one idea and don't try to cover too much ground.
- Invest in good lighting and sound.
- Tell your story in logical pieces so that it is clear why your project is important.
- In video interviews, ask open-ended questions. Spontaneous answers can capture the essence of the program's benefit.
- Post videos to YouTube and other sites, put them on your website, and use them at marketing events.

### WHAT SHOULD YOU WATCH OUT FOR?

- Avoid jargon.
- Use engaging and passionate people in your videos.
- Avoid talking heads. Use a combination of people, text, and images.
- A boring video is no more compelling than boring text. It is worth the additional time it may take to produce an interesting and well-made video.
- Professional video services can get expensive. If you use volunteers, be sure to give them discrete tasks and clear schedules.

### WHAT RESOURCES HAVE PROJECTS FOUND TO BE USEFUL?

- Interns with passion and talent

*"Videos tell the story better than you can on your own."*

*Sharon, Neighborhood Climate Prosperity Project, Denver, Colorado*

*"Watch out for videos that you personally like, but that don't connect with your target demographics—one size doesn't fit all."*

*Keith, HEAL Program, Little Rock, Arkansas*

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