

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT







# Example: Woonasquatucket River

- PCB's, Dioxins and mercury were found in the soil of the Woonasquatucket River in an urbanized area
- The science and potential threats to health were complex
- Media released the information, fear and anxiety gripped the community

DON'T SWIM OR WADE



**DANGER!**



**RIVER FISH  
ARE NOT SAFE  
TO EAT!**

# DO CANOE & ENJOY THE RIVER



# WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?

- Work with all stakeholders
- Find out the communication barriers that might exist
- Determine to use simple language that everyone can understand
- Can you narrow it down to one, two or three things that you most need to have heard?

# WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?

- Do you have a time frame in which you must get your message out?
- If you are in it for the long haul, could it be beneficial to release your message in small, digestible bites?

# EXAMPLE: Business Bulletins

- In an effort to reach and involve the entire community in watershed stewardship efforts, Providence Water wanted to enlist businesses
- Business owners are usually busy people
  - Send quarterly business bulletin that can be read in a few minutes – one page
  - Illustrate ways the business can save money or capitalize on good stewardship practices

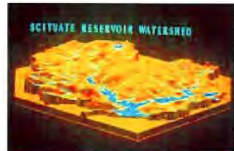
# CLEAN BUSINESS IN A WATERSHED



## The Scituate Reservoir Watershed Education Program ~~~ Passing On Clean Water

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Above is a 3-D image of the Scituate Reservoir Watershed.

Portions of Foster, Gloucester, Johnston and Scituate comprise this land area.

The Scituate Reservoir, lying in the lowest part of this land area, catches all water flowing over this watershed.

The Scituate Reservoir is a major source of drinking water in Rhode Island.

### *Does your business have a solid public image?*

Perceptions hold an intense amount of weight, regardless of the validity of those perceptions. The general public may have some perceptions about your business that could be invalid and with only a little more information, the truth would be known, thus improving the productivity, wealth and health of your business.

**Perception is everything.**

Perceive: to attain awareness or understanding of

(Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary)

You may have the perception that water quality is only affected by big industries or large farming operations. Or, you may think that only toxic wastes, not household cleaners and soaps, degrade water quality. Perhaps you have a difficult time making the connection between automobiles and water quality.

Let this bulletin change your perceptions on water quality.

Begin making informed decisions that not only improve the health of your drinking water, but also improve the productivity of your environment and your business operation.

## What's Driving Water Quality?

### PART ONE: PERCEIVING THE CONNECTION DRINKING WATER AND ENGINE-POWERED MACHINES



When most people think of pollution caused by automobiles and other engines, we think of air pollution. Although this assumption is true, autos (and other engine-fueled machines, like go-karts, dirt bikes, chain saws and lawn mowers) can also be significant contributors to water pollution. For example, oil, antifreeze and other fluids from the aforementioned equipment may leak onto the ground and then get washed into surface and ground waters. Or when tires and other parts of a car or dirt bike become worn down, some heavy metals (i.e. lead and iron) pollute water.

Water quality is driven down by things that are emitted from engine-powered technology, as well as unnatural conditions created by the roads that automobiles drive on.

# DEFINE YOUR AUDIENCE

- Adult residents of the community
- Young children
- Elementary, Middle & High School Students
- Businesses
- New Residents to the community
- Potential Partners – Professional, Municipal, Non-Profits
- Teachers

# INVOLVE YOUR AUDIENCE



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# Assume Your Audience Wants to Help



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- Direct mailing to people who were determined to live in areas abutting wetlands
- Helped people learn what types of plants, animals, sounds and soils that could indicate they were near or in wetlands
- Provided detailed GIS information that could help them make a determination
- Advised hiring a professional for final determination

# Help Your Audience – Let Them Know

- Example

- Lake Management Plan

- Invasive aquatic plants are destroying habitat for wildlife and recreational opportunities
    - Lake associations and lake front residents can help manage invasive growth by decreasing nutrient loading
      - don't feed water fowl, clean boat motor and bottom when transporting to different lake
    - We are helping them improve the quality of life on the water front – let them know this

# In Conclusion

- Keep your message simple – Define it
- Define your audience
- Determine how much time you have with your audience – will you have repeated opportunities
- What methods will you use to get your audiences attention
- Involve your audience
- Assume your audience wants to help
- Help your audience to see how You are helping Them
- MAKE IT FUN IF AT ALL POSSIBLE

# Contact Information

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