A Review of National Stormwater Outreach Efforts

Cute can be dangerous!

RI NEMO
June 1, 2006
Advisory Committee Kick-Off
Today’s Road Trip

- Review of Existing National Efforts
- Our Conclusions
- Back to Rhode Island
Reviewing Existing National Efforts

With so much out there, where do we start?
Check label for evaluation, before using!

Contents:
Stormwater Outreach

Have I been formally evaluated?
What did the evaluation show?
Maine

2003-2004 *Think Blue* TV and radio campaign

Borrowed from San Diego’s *Fowl Water/Think Blue* campaign
Maine

Primary Goal: Raise awareness and begin the move to action

Results:

- 14.4% of Maine adults remembered the ads
- 8.7% of Maine adults said that the ads were related to stormwater runoff or pollutants in water
- 26% said that they have or are likely to take action to reduce stormwater pollution

Total cost: $213,000
Scientific study:

Primary Goal: Improve stormwater quality

Results:

• Education efforts in the form of hands-on assistance and one-on-one consulting with homeowners led to significant adoption of BMPs

• No significant changes in measured behaviors such as lawn watering and fertilization, car washing, leaf disposal, or pet waste management
Minnesota

- Newspaper ads
- Radio ads
- Shopping bag messages
- Fridge magnets
- Lawn care publications
- Press releases
- Water education workshops
Primary Goals: Change behavior to keep leaves, grass clippings, and fertilizer off streets and driveways and use fertilizer with a “middle number” (phosphorus content) of 3 or lower

Results:

• 13% of respondents reported that they purchased safer or different products
• 11% reported that they don’t use or use less fertilizer
• 6% reported that they clean up grass clippings/leaves, yard debris, and trash
• 5% reported that they use fertilizer with little or no phosphate

Total cost: $200,000
1998-9 Statewide Media Campaign (Phase 1):
- Bus signs
- Radio ads
- Television ads
- Newspaper ads
- Employee Outreach program
- Information Clearinghouse and website
- Public workshops; utility bill inserts; poster contest;
  Speaker’s bureau
Primary Goals: Raise public awareness about 1.) what household-generated polluted runoff is, 2.) that individuals can prevent some of this, and 3.) how polluted runoff enters local water bodies

Results:

Approximately 20% of respondents reported having seen or heard information about polluted runoff.

Increase from 44% in 1998 to 46.4% in 1999 of respondents who correctly answered that runoff from streets goes into local water bodies

No significant change in the mean value (4.35 on a scale of 1-10) that respondents reported, when asked how much household activities contribute to polluted runoff

Total cost: $274,000
California: San Diego

2002-2003 Regional Media Campaign: Think Blue, San Diego

3 TV and radio Public Service Announcements
TV ads aired more than 2,000 times
The ads won two Telly Awards and four local EMMY awards.
California: San Diego

Primary Goals: Inform about beach pollution and how the storm drain system operates; change some behaviors from those that pollute to those that don’t; increase slogan awareness

Results:

• 9% increase in the number of respondents who recycle leftover paint
• Increase (% not disclosed) in the number of respondents who recycle radiator fluid
• Awareness of what happens to things that go in the storm drains remained static.
• Awareness of the Think Blue slogan increased (% not disclosed).
California: San Diego

Cost of developing PSAs: $175,000

Cost of airing PSAs: $253,615

Donated airing time: $160,286

Ads that *might* have affected behavior: priceless?

We have to consider budget and effectiveness!
California: Santa Clara

Watershed Watch Campaign was the component of the Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program responsible for public education and participation.

TV ads
radio ads
print ads
California: Santa Clara

Primary Goals: Increase target audience’s awareness about watershed stewardship and pollution prevention; influence behavior to protect watersheds

Results:

Between 1999 and 2003, a 19% increase in watershed awareness, measured as someone having heard something about watersheds.

Increase in the percentages saying oil and grease enter storm drains (1991: 16%; 2003: 44%)

Increase in the percentage saying pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers affect water quality (1991: 7%; 2003: 19%)

Increase in the percentage saying garbage affects water quality (1991: 5%; 2003: 16%)

Decrease in the percentage that recognize that various pollutants enter the storm drain (1999: 49%; 2002: 32%; 2003: 43%)

Decrease (percentage not disclosed) in the number of people who say that they take preventative actions to keep pollution out of storm drains.
California: Los Angeles

2003-2005 Los Angeles Media Campaign: Erase the Waste
TV, radio, print ads
California: Los Angeles

Primary Goals: Encourage Los Angeles County residents to reduce stormwater pollution by adopting simple, everyday actions such as throwing trash in a can or recycling bin, cleaning dog waste consistently, putting cigarette butts in ashtrays, joining or organizing community clean ups, and reducing, reusing, and recycling materials; focus was on potential health problems.

Results:

Total cost: $5 million
Washington, Puget Sound

Beginning in 1995, the Puget Sound Action Team and Water Quality Consortium used television and newspaper advertising.
Primary Goal: Increase awareness and encourage change of four individual behaviors, contributing to pollution in Puget Sound – lawn fertilizing, leaking oil from cars, disposing of pet waste, and car washing

Results:

Residents are growing more conscious of environmental issues, but those issues are secondary to crime and education in their region.

When asked to identify environmental issues of greatest importance in the region, the percent of respondents answering “water pollution” increased from 24% in 1995 to 39% at the end of the one-year campaign in 1996.

Industrial waste was still considered the leading cause of water pollution by residents. However, boating, driving cars, fertilizing lawns, and pet waste all received increased ratings in terms of perception of their contribution to the area’s water pollution.

On an overall basis, practice of listed environmentally-friendly habits (e.g. recycling motor oil, avoid using pesticides/fertilizers when there’s chance of rain) decreased slightly after the campaign.
Maryland, Chesapeake Bay

NO APPETIZERS WERE INJURED IN THE MAKING OF THIS LAWN

EXCESS FERTILIZER WASHES TO THE BAY, WHERE BLUE CRABS ARE RAPIDLY DISAPPEARING.

www.ChesapeakeChic.org
Maryland, Chesapeake Bay

The Chesapeake Bay Program initiated a public-private partnership, called the Chesapeake Club, to conduct a media campaign addressing Bay pollution.

The 2004-2005 campaign used TV, newspaper, and Metro Station ads.

Here are a few more examples:
Maryland, Chesapeake Bay

PROTECT THE CRABCAKE POPULATION

HOLD OFF ON THE LAWN FERTILIZER UNTIL FALL,
BEFORE THERE ARE NO GENUINE MARYLAND CRABCACKES.

www.ChesapeakeChub.org
Maryland, Chesapeake Bay

THE LUNCH YOU SAVE MAY BE YOUR OWN

PREVENT THE RUNOFF, HOLD OFF ON THE LAWN FERTILIZER UNTIL LATER THIS FALL.
Primary Goals:

Surveys showed that 90% of watershed residents reported being concerned about the Bay’s health.

After considering a few dozen stewardship behaviors, their impact on water quality, and the ability of residents to engage in those behaviors, fertilizer use in the spring was targeted, because it had been linked to a spike in nutrient runoff at that time of year.

Program Methodology:

The targeted behavior was considered ideal because it was simple, socially-reinforceable, and affected Bay water quality.

Brand identity was cultivated that was NOT associated with an environmental issue, but rather a lifestyle issue.

Messages were intentionally “humorous and somewhat irreverent, rather than dour and serious.”
Program Methodology Continued:

Lawn care providers have become certified as “Bay friendly,” and restaurants distributed the message using clever coasters.

Results:

• 72% reported exposure to a Chesapeake Bay campaign about lawn care and could correctly identify one of the themes of the campaign.

• Respondents exposed to the campaign were less likely to use fertilizer in the spring (38% compared to 43% for those not exposed).

• Respondents exposed to the campaign were more likely not to fertilize at all (37% versus 27% for those not exposed).

• The number of respondents who said that they planned not to fertilize at all doubled from 15% in 2004 to 34% after the 2005 campaign.
It Was a Long, Strange Trip – What We Learned

Existing national stormwater media campaigns seem to target:

General stormwater awareness
Pet waste disposal
Motor vehicle care
Lawn and gardening practices
Household chemicals and waste
Septic system maintenance

But in spite of the attractive ads, the evaluations reveal mixed results. In some cases, there were gains in understanding of watershed concepts and the recognition that individual behaviors contribute to water pollution.
Without results indicating that behavior changes related to increased knowledge actually occur, and that those changes, in turn, lead to stormwater quality improvements, our conclusions about these national efforts are limited.

So, where do we go from here?
The **Stormwater-Outreach-Message** Ad Hoc Committee will need to consider:

- Techniques that seemed to work in existing campaigns such as certification and labeling programs with the private sector (MD) and intensive hands-on assistance (CT)
- The role of local ordinances
- The appropriateness of a statewide message

In the meantime, the Advisory Committee can offer input that will shape the Ad Hoc Committee’s focus.
Focusing on Rhode Island

Recent research of New England indicates that:

• 99% of respondents believe that clean drinking water is very or extremely important.

• 23% are very aware of factors affecting drinking water and human health.

• Respondents feel that they have *already* changed their behaviors with respect to water quality issues; 50% cited changes to yard watering practices and 43% cited changes in use of pesticides.

Other local studies show that there is great support for protecting Narragansett Bay and drinking water.

We need more input about Rhode Island’s specific needs FROM YOU!
What About Rhode Island’s Specific Needs?

1.) What stormwater pollutant deserves the most concern in RI?

2.) What is the cause of that pollutant?

3.) What water resource is the most important as we formulate our own stormwater education campaigns?