BEST COMMUNICATION PRACTICES FOR PROP 218 NOTICES, EVENTS, VIDEOS AND SO MUCH MORE

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November 14, 2018
WHY COMMUNICATE?
The Why?

- Risk prevention
- Crisis happens…be prepared!
- If you don’t communicate - someone will communicate for you
- Your agency has relevant information
- Proactive is better than reactive
Risk Prevention

• Learn about potential issues before they become a crisis
• Implement solutions to problems with early identification
• Reduces claims
• More likely to have customers engagement / buy in
Crisis Happens

• Crisis can be in all forms:
  1. financial malfeasance
  2. sexual harassment
  3. labor relations
  4. incidents can become larger
  5. employee death
IF YOU DON’T COMMUNICATE – SOMEONE WILL DO IT FOR YOU

• “No Comment” = admission of wrongdoing/guilt
• Voids cause media and customers to fill in the blanks
• Do not give up your right to tell your own story
Board members love to feel pride about their agency
Employees love to feel pride about their agency
Customers love to feel pride about their rates going to responsible organizations
There IS a return on investment!
Proactive Communications Vs.

- Proactive = controlled communications
- Reactive = someone else is in control
- Builds awareness
- Sets expectations for customers
- Raises your organization’s credibility
- Creates positive public perception
- Increases customer trust
THE DREADED...

PROPOSITION 218 NOTICES
DEVELOP A CALENDAR

- **Nov**: Workshops & Pre-Design
- **Feb 2/16**: Board Selects Rates
- **Mar 3/6 – 4/20**: 45 Day Notice
- **Apr 4/20**: Hearing to set Sewer Service Charge
- **Jun 6/1**: Public Budget Meeting
- **Jul 7/20**: Place SSC on Tax Rolls
Determine your Key Messages

- Aging Infrastructure
- Long-term Planning
- Environmental and Regulatory Requirements
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Remind</th>
<th>customers who you are and what you do for them</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>your previous successes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Build</td>
<td>trust with your customers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communicate</td>
<td>your agency’s vision/messages</td>
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<td>Explain</td>
<td>why you need a rate increase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commit</td>
<td>to customers what you will do with additional monies</td>
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PERSONALIZE YOUR AGENCY
DEVELOP VISUALS - SERVICE AREA

2013-2018: Central San will upgrade two of our 10 pump stations, which are critical for conveying wastewater to the treatment plant and from where the treated effluent is to be pumped back into the sanitary sewer system. The pumps on each of the two pump stations are expected to be replaced and renovated as necessary to ensure they remain in adequate operating conditions. From a service standpoint, these two pump stations provide a means efficiently to handle the peak demand for the area.

2017-2020: Central San will upgrade one of our 10 pump stations, which are critical for conveying wastewater to the treatment plant and from there, the treated effluent is to be pumped back into the sanitary sewer system. The pumps on each of the two pump stations are expected to be replaced and renovated as necessary to ensure they remain in adequate operating conditions. From a service standpoint, these two pump stations provide a means efficiently to handle the peak demand for the area.
V/ISUALS: WHAT DO I GET?

Collection Systems/Street Pipe Replacement

2017-2019: Central San will replace 14 miles of sewer pipe in Walnut Creek, Lafayette, Martinez, and Orinda to maintain collection system reliability.
2017-2019: Central San will upgrade five of its 19 pump stations, which are critical for conveying wastewater to the treatment plant from areas where the terrain requires it to be pumped over hills, sometimes at a rate as high as 33,000 gallons per minute. The five pump stations set for replacement and renovation are nearly 50 years or older. They will be upgraded with new-technology equipment that is more reliable and reduces energy costs, such as sophisticated variable-frequency drives to more efficiently match the power demand to the flow.
**VISUALS: WHAT DO I GET?**

**Pump Stations**

2017-2019: Central San will upgrade 15 of its 33 pump stations, which are critical for providing water to the hundreds of miles of water distribution pipes. The pump stations are responsible for moving water from the source to the customer. The upgrades will ensure that the stations are efficient and reliable, providing a steady flow of water to meet the demand.

**Treatment Plant**

2017-2019: Upgrades at the treatment plant will include renovations of all solids handling facilities and odor control equipment, improved energy efficiency, enhanced security, and development of innovative energy projects. The upgrades will ensure that the plant is efficient, secure, and sustainable.

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Would you read this? Or...
WOULD YOU READ THIS?
AVOID JARGON

T Cut, Pipe bursting, Collection System, Prop 218, Primary Treatment, Solid handling, Variable, NPDES, Effluent, NPDES, Cogeneration, Dissolved-Air Flotation, Digesters, Force Main, Drive, Sludge, Cake, Lateral, Turbidity, MGD, POTW's, UV
SUMMARIZE THE TAKEAWAYS

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

1. Our planning efforts have identified large-scale projects to address aging infrastructure at the treatment plant and in the collection system.

2. We have identified newer technology/upgrades to meet emerging regulations and capacity issues.

3. Our extensive pipe replacement program will maintain and improve service levels.

4. We value our customers and strive to provide you with exceptional service at responsible rates.

5. We will continue to protect public health and the environment, building on our 70 years of experience.
EVENTS! THEY ARE HARDER THAN YOU THINK
WHY HOST AN OPEN HOUSE?

• Customer research indicated a need to build connection with our brand/services
• Positive connection before major infrastructure improvements/rate increases
• Engage your customers with interpersonal contact - they are 70% more likely to be supportive of your work
EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNICATIONS

• Treat communications work like other Central San work
• Include strong strategic communication plan/metrics
• Implement a comprehensive communications strategy
• Focus on the uniqueness of your customer base
RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

1. Develop a budget
2. Set clear goals/objectives: attendance, recognition, tours, branding/advertising & activities
3. Plan well in advance
4. Obtain Board/employee buy-in
5. Incorporate a theme
RECOMMENDED BEST PRACTICES

6. Play to your agency’s strengths
7. Include food
8. Anticipate safety hazards
9. Have staff represented volunteers, including the Management Team
10. Buy a one day extra coverage insurance policy
11. Have a fantastic Communications Team!
OUR WORK NEVER ENDS

The Lifecycle of a Paint Can