

Talking to the Media

Talking to the media can help get environmental health messages of health, safety, and equity to your community. Input from experts like you raises the visibility of the expertise of environmental health professionals. Here are some tips on how to talk to the media.

If you have a public information office, contact them before responding to the interview request. They can help screen the reporter, help you formulate your message, and help you practice it.

Be #1

News moves fast. If you want to be included in the narrative, respond promptly. The more you do, the more likely reporters will come to you in the future.



Interview your interviewer. Ask them the purpose of the story, the audience, and then schedule a time for an interview.



Take 2

During the interview, if you get flustered, lost, or confused... pause, gather your thoughts, ask clarifying questions, and answer clearly. It's ok to stop and start again.



Use these phrases as an alternative to "I don't know":



The interview doesn't stop when the recorder is off. Anything said to a reporter can be reported.

You Pick 3

Before meeting with the reporter, decide on your 3 main messages – only 3! Write these out as you would say them to a friend. Use short, simple sentences.

Write down questions you think a neighbor might ask, then practice answering them out loud, referring to your 3 main messages. Speak slowly, clearly, and concisely.

Address the big picture problem and why it matters in your message.



Stuck?

Use these useful bridging phrases

