

Media Release Checklist for Conservation Districts

✓	Before writing the release:
	<p>Identify outlets: Research local and regional media outlets. Remember to consider non-traditional outlets, such as social media and blogs (e.g. Thurston Talk, Whatcom Talk) and partner newsletters. If you're promoting an event, research event calendars through county chambers of commerce, visitor and tourism bureaus, newspapers, public radio, and allied partner websites and social media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If your story / event is related to agriculture, consider emailing a submission to the Office of Farmland Preservation monthly newsletter (housed at the State Conservation Commission). Send submissions to ofp@scc.wa.gov by the 25th of the month, and put "Newsletter submission" in the subject line.
	<p>Know submission process: Some media have electronic submission forms, some prefer email — check their website or contact them directly so you know what works best.</p>
	<p>Check publication period: Find out whether the publication is daily or weekly (or monthly or bi-monthly for newsletters); Is there a preferred day or deadline for submissions?</p>
	<p>Build relationship(s): Research and build relationships with reporter(s) that cover your topic areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read their recent stories, making note of their areas of interest. Schedule a brief meeting to introduce yourself/your district and deliver press kit.
✓	Writing the release:
	<p>Make it relevant: Frame the story around topics of most interest to reporters and the community (research what's making the news lately and see if you can tie it to your story/event).</p>
	<p>Use "inverted pyramid" structure: Put the most newsworthy information first, followed by important details, followed by background and general information.</p>
	<p>Include quotes: Back up your story with quotes from spokespeople who authenticate and/or bring a personal perspective to your story.</p>
	<p>Keep it short: Limit the length to 1-1.5 pages or check to see if the media outlet where you're sending the story has a preferred word count / story length.</p>
	<p>Avoid / explain all acronyms: If a term is only mentioned once or twice in your story, don't bother confusing the reader with the acronym—just use the full name. Make sure all necessary acronyms are spelled out the first time they're used.</p>
	<p>Double-check the details: Make sure your contact information is correct and — if the release is about an event — that you included all important details (date, time, place, rsvp, etc).</p>
✓	Submitting the release:
	<p>Include a pitch: If submitting via email, include a 2-3 sentence pitch in the body of the email; if possible, briefly explain how your story relates to a recent topic/story covered by that media outlet/reporter.</p>
	<p>Attach photos: Include 1-3 photos with clearly labeled titles, captions, and credits (if applicable). Try to submit pictures that include people.</p>