



BEYOND PESTICIDES

701 E Street, SE ■ Washington DC 20003
202-543-5450 phone ■ 202-543-4791 fax
info@beyondpesticides.org ■ www.beyondpesticides.org

The 1-2-3s of Public Service Announcements

1. Choose the scripts you would like to use for your city, county or state. It is recommended to send similar scripts of several different lengths so radio stations can have several options to choose from, depending on how much time they have to fill. DJs or other radio personnel read the scripts. Some stations may accept audio taped versions of a script. See *More Resources* for audio support.
2. Craft a PSA message script and write the cover letter for your area and organization. The cover letter is somewhat a pitch to show importance. See *More Resources* for support in crafting a message and writing a cover letter.
3. Contact radio stations in your area to see who is in charge of PSAs. Address the cover letter directly to this person, and call them to see what specific formats or lengths for PSAs they may want. Also ask how they prefer to receive scripts, as some stations prefer faxes or mail, and others primarily use email.
4. Submit the cover letter and PSA scripts to each station that you are targeting. PSAs should be submitted 2 weeks prior to when you'd like them run. If it is an on-going PSA, the window for play-time is rather large. (PR folks seem to feel that the shelf life of PSAs can be up to 12 weeks).
 - Type one PSA per page, single sided. Double or triple space. Use regular white paper. Type in upper and lower case letters. Use all-caps only to emphasize words which, when spoken, should be emphasized.
 - See factsheet on cover letters at www.beyondpesticides.org/how-to/media.
 - Some suggest mailing a little treat with your PSA – like chocolates – if you have the money and time.
5. Be prepared to receive any interested callers and provide them more information. Listen for your PSA on the air!
6. Follow-up with your contact at the station to make sure they received your PSA. Smaller stations typically do not receive as many PSAs and are more likely to remember yours. If they received it, ask if they are considering it for airtime. If not, ask why. Do not ask them to air it.
7. Send a letter of thanks – even those that do not air the PSA. For those that do run the PSA, see if you can find out what length they used, frequency of play, and air times.

Other tips:

- Partisan stridency has to be avoided or the PSA will not air. By ensuring that the PSA presents the situation as a matter of health and safety, the radio station contact person will feel comfortable in airing the PSA because he/she won't be accused of airing a strictly partisan political piece. PSAs that attack the chemical industry or pesticide manufacturers, while promoting the banning or elimination of pesticides, will be seen as simple advertorials that will be rejected as PSAs. The radio stations might even come back with an offer to air the piece for a hefty price.
- Make direct contact with the person in charge of scheduling the station PSAs.
- Follow-up on a rejection — find out why they won't run the PSA.
- Include local and/or national facts in your cover letter – such as:

According to the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), spraying adulticides, pesticides intended to kill adult mosquitoes, is usually the least efficient mosquito control technique.

The American Medical Association's Council on Scientific Affairs states that "Particular uncertainty exists regarding the long-term health effects of low-dose pesticide exposure. ... Considering these data gaps, it is prudent ... to limit pesticides exposures ... and to use the least toxic chemical pesticide or non chemical alternative."

See Beyond Pesticides Issue Factsheets for more quotable facts.

Additional Support:

- Peter Drew, Peter Drew Voiceovers, 860-291-9476, <http://www.peterdrewvo.com> TV/RADIO. No charge for coalition members of Beyond Pesticides.
- Rachel Sumner, No Spray Coalition/BURNT, Nashville, rachelsumner@excite.com, <http://www.nospraynashville.org>. For TV PSAs and contact with a commercial filmmaker.
- Patti Wood, Grassroots Environmental Education, pjw@omnimusic.com, Tel. 516-883-0121. Pre-recorded audio announcements with your group's name are available for \$50.

More Resources:

Media Factsheets www.beyondpesticides.org/how-to/media -
Issue Factsheets www.beyondpesticides.org under ISSUES/CAMPAIGNS