



Washington Gas Energy Services

A Washington Gas Affiliated Company

Promoting Wind Energy to the Public and the Media

Every day the media is telling the story of businesses and organizations that are having an impact on the community. Your investment in wind energy is having a positive impact on our community. With the current state of energy in our country, coupled with growing environmental concern, there is a great opportunity for your company to reach out and tell a compelling story to your current and potential customers.

Whether your investment is a part of your company's mission statement, or a demonstration of your commitment to the renewable energy community, you are creating a compelling story. Taking this story to the media is easy. Here we provide you with some simple tips to follow to help you garner media coverage for your business and promote yourself to potential customers.

Step 1: See what media is available in your area.

There are a number of media outlets in our community—print, digital and broadcast—that all offer great potential for you to reach out to a segment of the public that may otherwise never come across your business. The first step in garnering media coverage is to find out what your potential customers read and watch. From the local free shopper and a blogger's Web site to national outlets like the *Washington Post* and the *Baltimore Sun*, the number of outlets available to spread your message is growing every day.

Step 2: Find out who is doing the talking.

After you decide what outlets would be best to help you reach the public and potential customers, the next step is to determine who reports on the topics appropriate to your business, product or service area. At any given outlet there are reporters and writers who cover businesses, restaurants, nonprofits, education, art and dozens of other topics. For your business you should determine who regularly covers the topics appropriate to you. You can find this out by leafing through the newspaper, or searching the outlet online. Alternatively, you can also call the main information line at a media outlet and ask the receptionist who reports on your topic. Be sure to gather the contact information for these individuals, including phone numbers and email addresses.

Great Facts About Wind Energy*:

For every 1,000 kilowatt hours of energy from wind you buy, you help to eliminate:

- 1,350 pounds of CO₂
- 11 pounds of Sulfur Dioxide, Nitrous Oxide and Mercury
- 15 pounds of solid waste
- Wind energy prevents heat-trapping greenhouse gases from contributing to climate change.
- SO₂ and NO_x released in to the air react to form acid rain.
- NO_x reacts to form ground level ozone, an unhealthy component of smog.

* Annual Energy Review, 2000 (Page 221)

Renewable Energy Credit:

A REC, or 'Renewable Energy Credit,' serves as a tool to track clean energy such as the wind power purchased through WGES. It is a commodity that represents all of the environmental benefits of 1000 kilowatts per hour of clean energy. A 'wind energy credit' relates to a REC produced by a wind farm.



Step 3: Write your story down.

When you reach out to the media to help tell your story, the first thing they are going to ask you is "Why?" Prepare yourself to answer this question. What about your business is of interest to the public? Maybe you were born and raised in the community that your business is in or maybe it is the first of its kind in the neighborhood; whatever you think makes you stand out, write it down. Also, review the articles and clips from the media outlet that you selected and see what types of things these reporters are covering. What about your business might fit into these stories? One very important thing to include is the fact that your business uses local or national wind energy as a part or for all of your energy consumption. Not only are you supporting your community, but you are also reducing the environmental and health impact of your business' energy consumption.

Step 4: Tell your story.

The next step in getting attention from the media is to tell your story. Traditionally, the best way to get your information to the media is to craft a straightforward press release. You can find a number of examples by doing a basic search on the internet. **We have also included a sample press release with this document that you may easily customize for your use.**

Send an email, addressed to each reporter or writer individually, with the information from your press release copied into the 'body' of the email instead of attached. This will prevent the email from being filtered into junk mail. A few days after you send this information, make sure to follow up with the reporter or editor to confirm that they received your materials and to encourage them to cover your business.

If they request more information, you can send them over what is called a Press Kit. Basic Press Kit elements include:

- Company overview
- Executive/owner bios
- Your wind energy press release
- Past articles about your company
- Examples of your products/overview of your services

Creating media coverage for your company will help put you out in front of the public and introduce you to thousands of potential customers and clients. Including basic media outreach as a part of your business plan will help spread the word about your company and your commitment to the community and the environment!

Tips for Writing a Good Press Release:

- Stick to the facts, no need to sensationalize what you do.
- Keep it simple, use only enough words to tell your story.
- Use real life examples about your company.
- Write for the media, they are your audience.
- Beware of industry jargon, keep your text simple.
- Use correct grammar and make sure to spell check.
- Write the release in the third person.

Benefits of Wind Energy You Could Include:

- Wind energy reduces air pollution from traditional energy sources like CO₂, NO_x and SO_x.
- Wind energy helps to slow the process of global warming which threatens our ecosystems.
- Renewable energy sources also reduce water, land and thermal pollutants that are a side effect of traditional energy.
- They have a real economic impact on the community, and by purchasing wind energy you are reducing these negative impacts.
- Wind energy helps to create energy diversity and security—helping to ensure sustainable growth in our community.
- By buying wind energy you are supporting change in our country's energy generation.