

Checklist: Developing Messages

DRINKING WATER RISK COMMUNICATION TOOLKIT

Wording of the message:

- Clearly defines what information is – fact, estimate, theory
- Avoid complex notations or formulas
- Uses clear language appropriate for intended audience
- Does not use terms the intended audience might find offensive
- Avoids acronyms and abbreviations
- Uses clear, concise headings and relevant graphic elements

Narrative Style – when being used:

- Tells a story using narrative techniques like a including a hero role or mentor role to help audience understand how to achieve the desired action or outcome
- Is audience focused – language and information the audience will understand and wants or needs

Newsletters:

- The mailing list has been developed
- There is a mechanism for updating the mailing list
- Is consistent from issue to issue

Pamphlets, booklets and fact sheets:

- Each is focused to meet specific audience needs
- Each is self-contained
- All strive for consistency
- Each has been distributed where the audience lives

Posters, advertisements, and displays:

- Text portions are written in a language that the audience will understand
- Text messages are clear and simple
- All graphics reinforce the message
- Visuals will be displayed in locations where the audience will see and heed them
- Information is included about where the audience can get additional information.

For articles:

- Article is written for publications that will reach the audience

Technical Reports:

- Report is structured to meet audience needs
- Report uses language and organization that lead the reader through the report

Adapted from Risk Communication: A Handbook for Communicating Environmental, Safety, and Health Risks, IEEE Press, Lundgren and McMakin, 2013.

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