

Checklist: Working with Media Releases

When considering work with media representatives:

- Understand the role and mission of media you want to use – event-focused, hazards get more coverage, deadlines affect content, understand journalistic goals.
- Develop productive relationships with key members of media that regularly cover your topic.
- Develop a communication plan so you know what to do when you want to approach media and what to do when media approach you.
- Understand that inaccurate reports of information can and will happen, even with great planning. It may be difficult or not possible to address after information is released.

When working directly with media representatives, make sure that you:

- Prepare your messages and materials ahead of time.
- Focus on information that pertains to your journalist.
- Give reporters/media representatives the information they need and the information you want to give, in language your target audience understands (avoid jargon or overly complex language).
- Limit your answers to your expertise or organization's role – refer all other questions to others.
- Respect deadlines.
- Respect standards of disclosure.

Adapted from Risk Communication: A Handbook for Communicating Environmental, Safety, and Health Risks, IEEE Press, "Working with News Media Checklist", Lundgren and McMakin, 2013