

**O'Rorke, Inc.**

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**FY 2007-2008**

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**Regional Media Relations Campaign  
Final Report**

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**BAY AREA STORMWATER MANAGEMENT AGENCIES ASSOCIATION  
BAY AREA CLEAN WATER AGENCIES**

July 1, 2007 – June 30, 2008

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## **FY 2007-2008 Regional Media Relations Campaign**

### **Executive Summary**

The two goals of the ongoing BACWA and BASMAA media relations campaign are to 1) firmly establish the agencies as media contacts on water quality and pollution prevention issues, and 2) generate media coverage that encourages individuals to adopt behavior changes to prevent water pollution. In FY 07-08, the campaign continued to achieve these goals.

This year was **exceptional** in terms of the sheer number of breaking news responses including an op-ed in response to the oil spill, a letter to the editor in response to an Associated Press pharmaceutical story, a letter to the editor in response to growing amounts of litter in the Bay, and a letter to the editor to address the state drought focused on water recycling. Additionally, two reporters (at KGO-TV and KPIX-TV) were pursued regarding pursuing stories on proper pharmaceutical disposal. Placement highlights include an oil spill op-ed published in all of the Bay Area Newsgroup publications (including the *Oakland Tribune*) and an in-depth interview with Michele Pla on KBLX-FM. The Campaign also developed op-ed pieces on biosolids and the proposed renaming of the Oceanside Treatment Plant—both of which will be submitted to newspapers in FY 08-09.

Media coverage was pursued on the following pitches: recycled water workshop, pest control operators (EcoWise Certified), Top 5 Things You Can Do for the Bay, and the “Our Water Our World” campaign. The number of media and public service announcement (PSA) placements was plentiful this year, in part due to the outstanding coverage resulted from an op-ed submitted in response to the Cosco Busan oil spill, which garnered coverage in November.

This year O’Rorke and CH2M HILL also provided extensive behind-the-scenes counsel, crucial message development, and proactive media strategies to the agencies in response to the many breaking news stories that needed to be addressed. This was particularly the case with the sewage spills of January and February, where O’Rorke was able to encourage the agencies to speak up on this critical water quality issues for the Bay.

Maintaining and building upon good media relationships was key to the success of this year’s campaign, and was highlighted by the launch of this year’s program. With the intent of new outreach and growing past relationships we developed and sent an email to all media highlighting the campaign’s four main spokespeople and their areas of expertise. Spokespeople bios and photos were placed on both agency websites as well, allowing reporters to easily find the most appropriate person to interview.


O’Rorke and CH2M HILL also developed and facilitated a conference call media training to offer basic media tips to local programs as well as concrete information on how to use regionally developed materials at the local level. The training included a PowerPoint presentation so attendees could print out materials for future reference. 26 people participated.

Overall there were **46 media placements** in FY 07-08 including one print article, eight radio stories, eight letters to the editor and op-ed placements, and 10 web hits. PSAs were pursued for the first time? as well this year and resulted in 19 placements overall (15 radio; four on the web). (See Appendix A, Press Report.)

O'Rorke estimates the value of the coverage achieved in FY07-08 to be \$65,500, if placements are viewed in comparison to the cost of advertising with these media outlets. The total estimated value of this year's coverage represents a decrease from last year, but the actual number of placements is comparable. (See Appendix E, Figure 2). The decrease in value is directly attributable to significant PSA placements which can have a lower value than other kinds of media placements, and also to the significant time and resources spent helping the agencies work on message development and news responses and pitch strategy that was not "green-lighted" for actual pitching. These services are valuable and will hopefully aid in future decision-making by the agencies, but they do not always result in concrete media placements.

As Appendix E, Figure 3 illustrates, the agencies that contributed funding to the campaign received a tremendous return on their investment. The seven BASMAA members contributed an average of \$3,500 and the five BACWA principal agencies contributed an average of \$5,000. Given the total value of coverage received in FY07-08 was \$65,500, each BASMAA member received approximately \$18.00 worth of coverage for every dollar invested in the campaign and each BACWA principal received \$13.00 worth of coverage for every dollar invested. The return was even greater for BACWA's associate members who invested fewer resources to the campaign than BACWA principals.

What follows are recommendations for FY08-09 and a complete report on the accomplishments for the major tasks as outlined in the FY07-08 scope of work. Appendices include: Press Reports (Appendix A), Budget by Project (Appendix B), Print Articles (Appendix C), Circulation Information for Media Outlets (Appendix D), Comparison of FY05-06, FY06-07, and FY07-08 Media Placements (Appendix E, Figure 1), Comparison of Estimated Media Value (Appendix E, Figure 2), Comparison of Agency Contributions to Value of Media Coverage (Appendix E, Figure 3).



## Recommendations for FY 2008-09

Recommendations for FY08-09 include the following:

- Continue to strategize with the executive directors of BACWA and BASMAA to find ways to highlight the agencies' image as environmental professionals by including themes and messages in pitches that highlight the agencies' accomplishments in protecting water quality
- Maintain a strong presence with key reporters and media personnel in response to breaking news stories
- Hold a workshop with executive directors and/or boards of both agencies to determine campaign direction
- Strategize new approach for the media relations campaign
- Develop messaging that can be utilized proactively in response to possible breaking news stories

## Task A Accomplishments

**Generate long-term relationships with regional media outlets and establish BASMAA/BACWA representatives as information sources on water quality and pollution prevention issues.**

Building and maintaining relationships with the media continued in FY07-08, and media relationships were enhanced through the consistent, ongoing presence of the agencies and as a result of persistently pursuing the media.

In part, media success is a numbers game. A basic fact holds true: the more pitches conducted over time increases the likelihood of more quality media coverage. Media success is also based on the variety of stories pitched. Going to the same beat reporters with great frequency can sometimes hurt a campaign, so the goal for this project has been to conduct a variety of pitches aimed at different media professionals—some to environmental reporters, others to home section editors or consumer reporters, to name a few.

To further enhance media relationships, the Campaign specifically sought out other avenues for pitching, including pursuing green and business reporters. These sectors of the media have not traditionally been contacted and new relationships were sought out.

Additionally, as appropriate, thank-you emails were prepared and/or reporters were called or emailed when stories were placed to promote good long-term relationships on behalf of BASMAA/BACWA.

## Task A Recommendations

- Insert the agencies' overall message of their exceptionally positive work regarding pollution prevention into all media materials, including emails and press releases, as appropriate
- Continue to utilize the BACWA and BAYWISE websites as places to post background and contact information on the agencies' key media spokespeople for easy access by media personnel as needed
- Keep interested media personnel updated on progress of recycled water issues and projects as appropriate to further likelihood of future coverage

## Task B Accomplishments

**Generate balanced regional media coverage aimed at promoting individual behavior changes leading to water pollution prevention.**

In FY07-08, six media pitches (including PSAs) were pursued for coverage: recycled water workshop, *Our Water Our World* branding campaign, pest control operators (EcoWise Certified), Top 5 Things You Can Do for the Bay, Pollution Prevention Week PSAs, car washing PSAs, and the lawn PSAs distributed in the workplan year 06-07 garnered coverage in the workplan year 07-08. A summary of the coverage attained follows below.

Because this is a regional campaign, one goal is to ensure that the coverage garnered is truly Bay Area-wide. This goal was attained, as the campaign received coverage in the *Oakland Tribune*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, on KLIV-FM, KSRO-AM, KCBS-AM, KBLX-FM and also on numerous websites.

### **Lawn PSAs**

This pitch was scaled down to focus on lawn care issues exclusively after it was determined that "read labels" messages would be too complicated for PSAs. The revised strategy was to craft lawn PSAs encouraging listeners to access more information regarding less toxic lawn care. The pitch resulted in 10 placements.

### **Pollution Prevention PSAs**

This pitch was in conjunction with Pollution Prevention Week. PSA copy developed by BAPPG was distributed to all Bay Area radio stations with follow-up conducted by O'Rourke. The pitch resulted in seven placements.

### ***Our Water Our World* branding campaign**

A press release was created primarily aimed at print media, to call attention to the long-running OWOW campaign by specifically highlighting the in-store materials; the press release included photo of these materials. The pitch resulted in six placements including the *San Francisco Chronicle* and an interview with Geoff Brosseau that ran several times on KCBS-AM.

### **Recycled Water**

The Campaign conducted a pitch leading up to the October 29 recycled water workshop. O'Rorke and CH2M HILL wrote a media advisory and distributed it to the media, resulting in a radio interview with Michele Pla that aired on KLIV-AM. An op-ed was also written and ran in the *Marin Independent Journal*. The pitch resulted in five placements.

### **Top 5 Tips for the Bay**

A press release was created in time for the New Year holiday focused on getting people to make resolutions tied to the health of the Bay. The recent oil spill was also addressed and that angle was pursued- "do what you can--every little bit helps." This pitch resulted in one placement—KSRO-AM interviewed Phil Bobel.

### **Car Washing PSAs**

PSAs were developed to encourage residents to utilize car washing facilities or wash their cars on dirt, grass or gravel instead of driveways or paved roads. These PSAs were distributed in late June and were aired by KCBS-AM. In FY 07-08, this pitch resulted in two placements. Coverage from this pitch continued in FY 08-09.

### **EcoWise Certified Pest Control Operators**

O'Rorke and CH2M HILL worked closely with EcoWise Certified to develop message points and press materials featuring two angles on the story: one as a green business trend piece; the other aimed at resident consumers. Extensive pitching was done with business editors, green beat reporters, consumer reporters and home and garden section editors. Although there was some scant interest in the story, no placements were achieved. There were several obstacles during the pitch process, including Orkin's (a certified contractor) unwillingness to provide a spokesperson for an interview opportunity in San Mateo County and a considerable amount time spent waiting for contractors to be officially certified before this pitch could be pursued.

### **Breaking News Response**

This year there were many opportunities for breaking news responses and as a result this emerged as a major area of concentration for the campaign. With so many newsworthy events impacting Bay Area waters—Cosco Busan oil spill, the Associated Press pharmaceutical report, recycled water, drought, wastewater spills—O'Rorke was on alert to provide counsel on responses, develop op-eds, speaking points, and letters to the editor as necessary. The response that garnered the most coverage was the letter to the editor in response to the Cosco Busan oil spill, submitted to papers under both Michele Pla's and Geoff Brosseau's signatures. This news response garnered 14 placements (print and online). Other materials crafted and submitted were—litter letter to the editor authored by Geoff Brosseau, recycled water op-ed authored by Michele Pla, pharmaceuticals letter to the editor authored by Michele Pla, and drought letter (focused on recycled water) authored by Michele Pla. Customized pitches were made to two television stations (KPIX-TV and KGO-TV) to do a proper pharmaceutical disposal story based on leads provided to us. Both contacts were interested in doing a story and O'Rorke will continue to follow up as appropriate.

The Campaign also developed op-eds on biosolids and on the proposed renaming of the Oceanside Sewage Treatment Plant in June. Both of these pieces came as a result of breaking news coverage and both op-eds will be submitted for print placement in FY 08-09.

A significant amount of time was spent providing counsel to the executive directors and boards as appropriate on these breaking news stories, particularly the sewage spills. Often, these efforts did not result in an actual pitch but we do believe the process of message development, determining whether to respond and what role regional agencies should have on these issues, has been beneficial to the agencies in the long term and may help to guide this campaign in the coming year.

**The following pitches from the workplan were canceled for various reasons:**

- **Joint pitch with BASMAA Regional Advertising Campaign**—The RAC campaign will not launch until spring 2009.
- **Fats, Oils and Grease (FOG )**—Because this story had been pitched in consecutive years and because of the launch of San Francisco’s GreaseCycle campaign, O’Rorke advised the committee to not pursue the FOG pitch in FY 2007-08.
- **Pet Waste**—This lighthearted pitch, originally planned for fall 2007, was initially delayed because of the Cosco Busan oil spill. O’Rorke counseled the MR committee to hold off on this pitch while such a serious news story about the bay was unfolding. The pitch was considered for late spring but because the message was so tied to wet weather issues, O’Rorke and the project manager agreed not to pursue it in this FY07-08.
- **Cigarette Butts**— Most of the data on cigarette butts and attention on this pollutant comes during Coastal Clean up Day. Rather than compete with this major event without our own data, O’Rorke recommended not pursuing this pitch.

**Value of PSAs Placed in FY 07-08**

Significant PSA coverage was pursued in FY07-08. These efforts resulted in 19 placements valued at \$11,650.

**Value of Media Placements in FY 07-08**

Although there is no clear-cut way to assign monetary value to media coverage, the value of print articles and broadcast stories (collectively referred to as media placements) garnered can be derived by reviewing all media placements and assigning a fair market value cost to them if they had been purchased as advertising time or space. For example, peak drive-time rates on KCBS-AM are about \$1,000, and these can go up during the busy 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of the year or when inventory is tight. The typical news story will air on KCBS-AM at least 12 times in one day, with most of those placements falling during peak drive-time hours. Thirty-second ads in evening news programs can cost as much as \$2,000 each; however on foreign language stations, prices can be as low as \$300. Additionally, O’Rorke sought out estimates on the value of tie-in internet coverage from media salespeople and those were included in the valuation. For calendar listings, typical classified rates were used. **Note:** wire service stories and letters to the editor were not factored into this value estimate because there are no advertising comparisons to be made for

these venues. However, these placements are still valuable to the campaign. Based on this methodology, the value of the media garnered by the campaign in FY 06-07 is estimated at \$53,850 (not including the PSA coverage described above).

While media relations does not offer the guaranteed placements that advertising does, press coverage brings a special value to an effort that is hard to quantify. The credibility provided by a media outlet, a specific reporter or anchorperson to a story really elevates the quality of media coverage. People often naturally trust something they see on the evening news or read on page one of the *San Francisco Chronicle* or *San Jose Mercury News*. Today's consumers are also savvy to advertising and marketing practices aimed at getting them to buy products. For this reason, consumers increasingly view paid ads with skepticism. Media coverage helps to avoid this kind of negativity.

An analysis of the past three years of the campaign was also conducted in order to take a critical look at media placements achieved and estimated coverage value over time. Although FY07-08 showed a slight decrease over the previous year in value of placements, number of overall placements was comparable to FY 05-06. This can be explained by the fact that this year's placements included letters to the editor (for which no comparable advertising value can be determined) but did include ample radio coverage.

**Total Value of Media Placements and PSAs in FY 07-08: \$65,500.**

## **Task B Recommendations**

- Work closely with the executive directors to determine the direction of the campaign in FY 08-09
- Assist the agencies in determining the major issues of the coming year in order to focus efforts where they are most needed
- In light of recent discussions with the Executive Directors, we are going to spend some time looking at the media relations program as a whole this year, making sure we have a focus and approach that brings maximum value to BACWA and BASMAA. Our program has been very successful in getting coverage over the last few years, particularly on pollution prevention issues under Task B. We recognize, though, that wastewater and stormwater issues change and that the media landscape changes, and therefore we may not want to use the same tactics every year. We are therefore going to work with the BACWA and BASMAA leadership over the next few months to make sure that our focus and strategies really focus on the agencies' highest priorities and position BACWA and BASMAA as the go-to resources for the media on water quality issues. We may end up with a combination of strategies that includes some of our traditional pitches and some other approaches.

## APPENDIX A: Press Reports

Pitch	Print	Radio	Web (on line)	Overall Placement
<b>Lawn PSAs</b> Late June 2007 and July 2007		KIQI-AM (Spanish) ALICE (KLLC-FM) Live 105-FM KCBS-AM KYOU-FM Movin'99.7-FM KFRC-FM KBLX-FM	KCBS-AM (Still on website as on 9/11/2007)  KBLX-FM (Still up as of 6.24.08)	<b>10</b>
<b>BACWA General Messages</b> water management, the threat of drought, what people can do on a personal level to ensure we have clean water, etc		KBLX-FM Interview (Michele Pla) 7/22/07  "Bayview" (half hour interview)		<b>1</b>
<b>Pollution Prevention PSAs</b>		KALW-FM KIQI-AM (Spanish) KATD-FM (Spanish) KPOO-FM ALICE (KLLC-FM)	ALICE (KLLC-FM) Movin'99.7-FM	<b>7</b>
<b>Our Water Our World</b>	<i>SF Chronicle</i>	KCBS-AM  9/2/2007  (3 versions multiple runs)	KCBS-AM Website (w/direct link to Our Water Our World)  SFGATE Website (w/direct link to Our Water Our World)	<b>6</b>
<b>Recycled Water op-ed by Michele Pla</b>	<i>Marin Independent Journal</i>  "More recycled water is needed" 10/4/2007	KLIV-AM  10/29/07  (ran 3 times)	<i>Marin Independent Journal</i>  "More recycled water is needed."	<b>5</b>
<b>op-ed in response to the Cosco Busan Oil Spill by Michele Pla and Geoff Brosseau</b>  November 2007	<i>East County Times</i> <i>Valley Times</i> <i>San Ramon Valley Times</i> <i>Contra Costa Times</i> <i>West County Times</i> <i>Oakland Tribune</i> (Letter) <i>Alameda Times-Star</i> (Letter)  All ran on 11/24/2007		<i>East County Times</i> <i>Valley Times</i> <i>San Ramon Valley Times</i> <i>Contra Costa Times</i> <i>West County Times</i> <i>Oakland Tribune</i> (Letter) <i>Alameda Times-Star</i> (Letter)  All ran online 11/24/2007	<b>14</b>
<b>Top 5 Tips for the Bay</b>		KSRO-FM Interview with Phil Bobel aired on 12/24/2007		<b>1</b>
<b>Car Washing PSAs</b>		KCBS-AM	KCBS-AM	<b>2</b>

## **APPENDIX B: Budget by Project** **TO BE UPDATED**

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<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Amount Spent</b>
ORPR Services General Tasks, Mtg. Attendance, Assist with Project Mgr. Recruitment, Reports, Work Plan Development, Final Report	\$
ORPR Services Designated Pitches	\$
ORPR Services Responses to Breaking News	\$
<b>Total Amount Spent</b>	<b>\$ (June 30<sup>th</sup>)</b>
<b>Total Budget</b>	<b>\$ 37,000</b>
<b>Total Remaining</b>	<b>\$</b>



## Water wise

**L**eave it to the water conservationists to create an oasis in the desert of environmentally responsible shopping. Bay Area Clean Water Agencies have planted a cute little seal — “Our Water, Our World” — on shelves containing gardening and pest control products that are less toxic and more friendly for our waterways.

These are the products that typically run off into storm drains once the rains start, meaning they end up in creeks and rivers and ultimately the bay and the ocean. Not everyone has the time to research products and study labels, so the seal makes it easy to choose prudently.

Nearly 200 Bay Area stores are participating, including Sloat Centers, Cole Hardware, Orchard Supply Hardware and Home Depot. Displays near the products include fact sheets on attacking pests with minimal risk to environment, pets and people. [www.ourwaterourworld.org](http://www.ourwaterourworld.org).

# More recycled water is needed

**F**OR REASONS ranging from climate change, to reduced rainfall, to Delta smelt, water agencies around the Bay Area and state are asking us to cut back on the water we use. Some agencies have declared 2007 a drought year.

Although these efforts are important, water conservation can only take us so far. The Association of Bay Area Governments predicts that an additional 1.7 million people will make the Bay Area their home over the next 25 years. The regional demand for water calls for a reliable, drought-proof water supply that is already here in the Bay Area.

That water supply solution exists: recycled water.

Our precious supply of expensive, limited, potable water should be saved for drinking. The huge consequences of low snow pack and warmer temperatures point clearly to the need to invest in more water recycling projects. Using recycled wastewater for golf courses, parks and industrial cooling is proven to protect health, extend the potable supply and is technically feasible.

The Bay Area Clean Water Agencies, leaders in urban water resource management, recently published a paper on the importance of recycled water to the Bay Area. The

MICHELE PLA



Michele Pla is executive director of the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies.

paper provides many key messages.

Recycled water uniquely meets multiple regional objectives, it is affordable, and we know how to ensure it is safe for all legal uses. While several local Bay Area water and wastewater agencies are already investing local dollars in the development of recycled water, state and federal partnerships are needed to finance recycled water projects so that this technology can be used to the greatest extent possible.

The state is moving forward with the distribution of funds made available from both Proposition 50 passed by the voters in 2002, as well as Proposition 84 approved in November 2006. In fact, the state has set a goal to recycle at least

1.5 million acre-feet per year of recycled water by the year 2020. One acre foot can cover a football field in one foot of water and is enough to supply two families for a year (three in Marin).

Now the federal government is stepping up to the plate. Rep. George Miller, together with six Bay Area co-sponsors, passed HR 6218 to fund Bay Area Regional Water Recycling Program projects in Pacifica, Pittsburg, Antioch, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Redwood City and Gilroy. A companion bill, Senate Bill 1475, is now in the Senate, thanks to Sens. Barbara Boxer and Dianne Feinstein.

We are counting on our elected officials to bring a well-deserved federal partnership to our regional water solutions — and we need the state to continue its grant programs offering assistance to near term, feasible, ready-to-go projects that can produce both regional and statewide benefits.

Unless the state and federal government work with Bay Area water agencies, we at the local level simply will not be able to use recycled water as effectively as possible. In a low rain year and with climate change upon us, the time for a concerted group effort is now.

CENTRAL COUNTY

# CONTRA COSTA TIMES

Saturday, November 24, 2007

ContraCostaTimes.com

Volume 98, Number 177

50 cents plus tax

## *Your Turn*

READERS RESPOND TO THE TIMES

### Be extra careful with Bay

By Michele Pla and  
Geoff Brosseau

The Bay Area Clean Water Agencies and the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association are deeply saddened by the recent tragic event that has afflicted our beloved San Francisco Bay.

We want to acknowledge and thank the many volunteers who are helping to clean up the spill and protect our Bay.

Every day our agencies, which are local Bay Area municipalities and public utilities, are working to prevent water pollution. Our members operate wastewater treatment plants that treat household sewage as well as waste from commercial and public buildings to meet stringent water quality standards for the Bay.

We strive to educate residents about the connection between human activities; specifically, what makes it down the drain in your house and down the storm drain in the street affects the Bay water quality.

We want to keep the Bay

vital and healthy. As we have seen with this oil slick, our coastal members such as the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, Pacifica and Half Moon Bay understand the connection between our coastal waters and the Bay.

For water quality and environmental professionals like myself, the oil spill in the Bay is a severe blow.

But we want to remind all Bay Area residents that seemingly small actions still count. Make the switch to less-toxic gardening and pest control products; don't dispose of medication down drains; properly dispose of mercury-containing fluorescent lightbulbs. Please don't litter.

Although our Bay is in a fragile state right now, little things still do mean a lot and we all must do our part to prevent water pollution whenever we can.

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*Pla is executive director Bay Area Clean Water Agencies and Brosseau is executive director Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association.*

## Radio

Average daily audience sizes for the following Bay Area radio stations:

ALICE	= 10,100
KALW	= 150,000 weekly
KATD/KIQI	= 250,000 weekly
KBLX	= 400,000 weekly
KCBS-AM	= 29,100
KFRC	= 8,800
KLIV-AM	= 1,900
KPOO	= left a msg with Operations Manager (Called twice)
KSRO-AM	= 34,300, weekly
KYOU	= 500
Live 105	= 9,800
Movin'99.7	= 9,600

## Print

Average circulation for the following Bay Area newspapers:

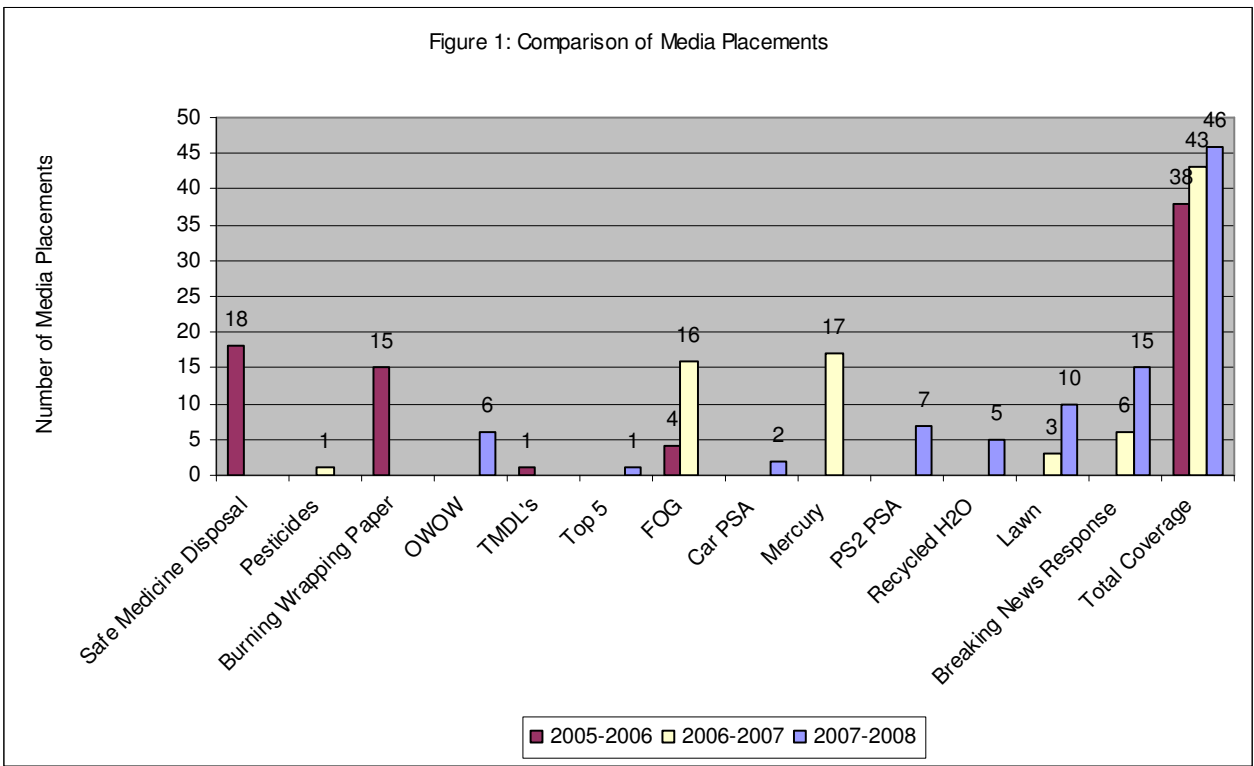
Alameda Times Star	= 7,158
Contra Costa Times	= 183,086
East County Times	= 31,895
Marin Independent Journal	= 99,000
Oakland Tribune	= 49,546
San Francisco Chronicle	= 512,129
San Ramon Valley Times	= 43, 123
Valley Times	= 43,123
West County Times	= 25,000

## Internet

Average page views per month for the following websites:

Alameda Times-Star	= 507,020
Contra Costa Times	= 561,392
KCBS-AM	= 45,532
Marin Independent Journal	= 200,000
Oakland Tribune	= 39,624
San Francisco Chronicle	= 4,127,922

Figure 1: Comparison of Media Placements



\*Regional Monitoring Program

Figure 2: Estimated Dollar Value of Media Coverage

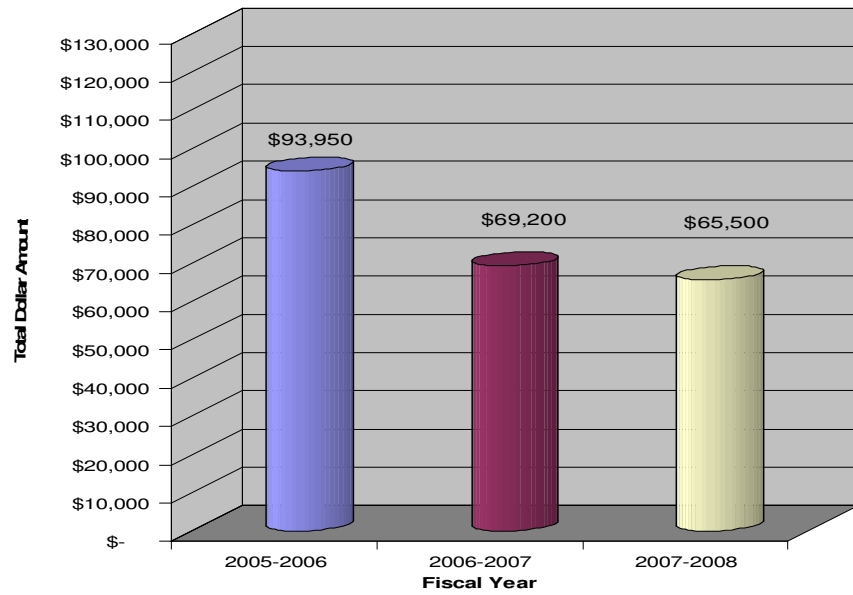
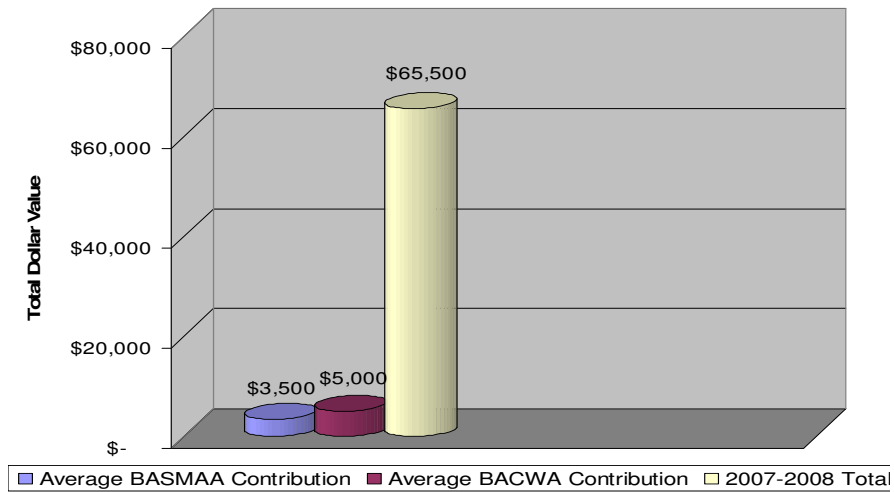


Figure 3: Comparison of Agency Contributions to Value of Media Coverage



\* BASMAA members received approximately \$18.00 of coverage for every dollar invested

\* BACWA members received approximately \$13.00 of coverage for every dollar invested