



Media Training

Best Practices to Share Your Stories

Fall 2025



Communities across the country are telling their story

ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

EPA cuts for Houston, expected deregulation of pollution could create 'perfect storm' for worse air quality

The Houston Health Department lost \$1 million for a solar power and native tree project in Fifth Ward. Air Alliance Houston also saw a pause on \$3 million in funding for pollution permit notifications to 10 Gulf Coast counties.

Dominic Anthony Walsh | April 25, 2025, 2:51 PM



Pictured is a hazy Houston sky in 2016.

Source: Getty Images/Public Media

Politics

In One of the Nation's Most Polluted Communities, Trump Terminates Funding for Air Monitoring

Residents in majority-Black north Birmingham, Alabama, have long been subjected to industrial pollution. The new administration has cut funding for a program aimed at measuring the impact.

By Lisa Holmgren | June 7, 2025



Rockaway is a New York Coastal Community Trying to Fight Erosion—and Then EPA Cancelled Funding

Planned programs to protect dunes and beaches on the Rockaway Peninsula in Queens are eroded by broken promises from Trump's EPA.

By Lauren Dabian | June 7, 2025



A view of the area where the local nonprofit Rockaway Initiative for Sustainability and Equity is working in Far Rockaway, a neighborhood in Queens, New York City. Credit: Lauren Dabian/Inside Climate News

Aberdeen Gardens' \$20 million EPA grant officially terminated

The funding was meant to address flooding and other environmental risks in Hampton's historic community



Play photo of a flooded intersection at 27th Street and Aberdeen Avenue after heavy rain from Hurricane Matthew in Hampton, Virginia, Oct. 2016. (Aileen Devlin / Cape Press)

By DEYLIN EPSON | delyn.epson@virginianews.com | Staff writer
UPDATED June 5, 2025 at 2:10 PM EDT

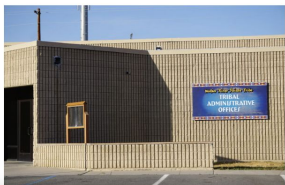
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NEWS MEDIA POLITICAL GOVERNMENT SUSTAINABILITY

EPA terminates \$20 million Walker River Paiute Tribe water infrastructure grant

By JENNIFER SOLIS | May 16, 2025 4:59 AM



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CITY OF POCATELLO

City of Pocatello responds to termination of over \$17 million in federal grants

TAYLOR B. CALDER taylor@journal.com May 9, 2025

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EPA cancels \$20 million grant for Southwest Virginia projects

The grant was aimed to pay for energy-efficient housing, child-care center improvements and identifying safe locations for when natural disaster strikes, among other projects.

By Matt Bower
May 9, 2025

WHEN AI ENTERS THE NEWSROOM

CARDINAL NEWS OUTLOOKS

AI will change the way we tell our stories. We're exploring the possibilities.

Sections

Los Angeles Times

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'Another broken promise': California environmental groups reel from EPA grant cancellations

Bianca Garcia drops a cart up the Pajaro River Bridge, as made to pick up supplies, in March 2023. Pajaro is reliant on domestic wells and street water systems that are riddled with contaminants above legal limits. (Robert Gaudier / Los Angeles Times)





Strategies for telling your story

1

Host a Press Conference or Press Call: Coordinate with other grantees and partners, then send invitations to regional press.

2

Direct Press Engagement: Reach out directly to local/regional press to share your story. Let EPN/L4GG know you are willing to speak to press. You can also send a press release with a longer narrative to lists of reporters in your region.

3

Amplify via Social Media: Share your story across social media and encourage your allies to amplify that story.

4

Update Your Elected Officials: Send another letter to your senators, representative(s), governor(s), state environment secretary, and mayor(s).





Best Practices for Storytelling

1. **Focus on the impact to real people and local communities.** Emphasize the work that you cannot do versus the disruption to your internal team/organization.
2. **Emphasize stories over aggregate numbers.** A powerful anecdote will travel farther and break through better than a story about “X tons of averted pollution” or “X dollars saved.”
3. **Keep your story streamlined.** Lots of bad things are happening but a laundry list will lose your readership. Tie into big themes such as energy affordability, reducing pollution, and resilience.
4. **When ‘on the record’ try to provide pithy points.** Reporters are talking to you to (1) get the necessary context for their story; and (2) looking for a 1-2 sentence quote. Write down some of the quotes you would like to see in print before your call.



A Quick Guide to Contacting Reporters

1. **Reporter and editor contact information is usually easy to find** on their website.
 - Reporters want you to contact them with potential stories!
 - Look for staff assigned to environment, public health, or local issues.
 - Another approach is to see what reporter wrote the most recent story about environmental issues for that publication and contact them.
 - Don't worry about emailing the "wrong" person – they can connect you with the right colleague.
2. **Send a short pitch via email.** This can be as simple as the following:
 - Hi [Reporter Name] – I lead a local nonprofit that received a \$X million grant through an EPA program. The Trump Administration is now trying to terminate the grant, which would prevent us from [share a short summary of your planned work and where it would take place]. This is particularly disappointing because there has been no evidence of wrongdoing with our grant nor is it clear that EPA even has a lawful basis to terminate it. I would be happy to speak with you if you're interested in a story about what this means for [name of local community].
3. **Speak to the reporter by phone**, if they are interested. Focus your conversation on your scope of expertise (i.e., what work you had planned, what will not happen if the grant is terminated). If they have questions about ongoing litigation, refer them to [Boni Croyle](#) for further assistance.



Communication Resources

Media Interview Strategies



Media Talking Points



Social Media Toolkit



If you need help preparing for a media interview, please contact epn-press@environmentalprotectionnetwork.org for 1:1 assistance.

