



Media and Publicity Tips

Congratulations, you're a Certified Michigan Clean Marina! Now it's time to let everyone know. You have many options for spreading the news, depending on the resources available to you.

Some publicity options include:

1. Interviews with local newspapers, radio stations, or television stations
2. News release sent to reporters and editors at local newspapers, radio stations, or television stations (template provided)
3. Posts and pictures on your facility's social media page
4. Updates to your facility's website
5. Plaques, signs, flags, or decals at your facility
6. Clean Marina materials you provide to marina guests

Whatever avenue(s) you choose, the Michigan Clean Marina team is happy to help. If your facility is in the news, please let us know! We can help expand the exposure. Send coverage to Danielle Baldridge (dbaldridge@mbia.org).

Advice for talking to the media

It may be intimidating to do an interview with the press, particularly if it's your first one. Just think of it as a conversation. ***You have the information the journalist is seeking, and they view you as a credible source, or they wouldn't have contacted you.*** Here are some tips on how to give a good interview:

1. **Be you:** When a reporter is asking about the Michigan Clean Marina Program, they are likely looking for your point of view on the program, why you joined, specific examples of BMPs you have implemented, other changes that have been made, what the result has been, etc.

Three Things

Reporters usually want three things from an interview:

- A better understanding of the topic.
- Something new, concrete, and/or interesting to present to audiences.
- Quotes that will add to the story.



2. **Be prepared — but don't over-prepare:** Ask the interviewer for an overview and what kind of questions they plan on asking before the interview. You can have general responses in mind before the interview takes place. You can also gather background and general information (number of slips, years in business, etc.) in advance so it's available at or before the interview. However, don't assume the interview will exactly match the questions you're prepared to answer. Interviews often meander and explore different ideas, and canned answers may not be helpful. If you feel like this isn't your strength, perhaps you can provide background information and recommend the interviewer speak with someone else for quotes. **Be focused:** Before the interview, make a short list of three or four points you want to hit during the discussion. For instance, you may find it helpful to outline some concrete examples of how the Clean Marina Program has worked to your benefit, changes you have made as a result of the program, feedback you've gotten from boaters, employee training, etc. Keep these simple and clear, and keep the list in front of you.
3. **Repeat yourself:** If you restate your key points several times during the interview, they'll have a better chance of being included in the final piece.
4. **Keep it simple:** Pay attention to the interviewer and their interest in what you are saying; follow their lead on how technical and detailed to get in your answers, but always err on the side of simplicity.
5. **Go solo:** Unless specifically asked to, don't team up with another employee for the interview. You can provide a coworker's information to the reporter, or hand over the interview at one point, but team interviews often are confusing.
6. **Take your time/ask questions:** If a question catches you by surprise, give yourself some time to think. Never be afraid to ask the interviewer to repeat the question or to wait while you form an answer. Ask for clarification if needed.

Good to Know

- You can ask, but most journalists won't allow a source to review the story before it posts or airs. If you do review it, focus on correcting any blatant errors.
- If you don't want the journalist to broadcast a certain piece of information, don't mention it. Most will adhere to the "off the record" rule, but some don't.
- Provide the interviewer with your name, title as you would like it to appear, your office number, and another way to reach you. Be accessible for follow up.
- In general, only 10-20% of what you discuss in an interview will make it into a news story. It's fine to flag important points, but don't try to tell the journalist what they should publish.



7. **Stay present:** Concentrate on the interview, and don't let anything distract you. Turn off your cell phone. Avoid checking email and other distracting activities.

Contact a communications professional for more advice:

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