

Regional Launch Ideas

I. Venues

University Research Facility

A university or prestigious research facility can be a good launch site choice if the research there benefits any of the sensitive groups for ozone or particles, including active adults, children, people with lung disease (such as asthma), people with heart disease or older adults.

Timing

- Anytime after September 30 launch

Who to Pitch for Coverage

- Local newspapers (main, life or community sections), radio stations (PSA or talk radio shows) and TV news shows
- Publications and media outlets in your region that target families and the healthy community
- Sample pitch letter included in this kit

Contacts

- Regional contact list included in this kit

Details

- Speakers could include the regional EPA administrator, a credible health resource such as a lead researcher or doctor (cardiologist or respiratory) and a local individual in the sensitive group.
- Staging could include the AQI banner, health facts from the presentation included in this toolkit (either displayed or discussed) and a display with the color-coded chart.
- An auditorium, atrium or the front steps of a prestigious university in your region can be an appropriate backdrop for your announcement, especially if high-profile research conducted at the university focuses on human respiration or air pollution issues.

Hospital

This venue selection is especially appropriate if the focus of the hospital is treatment and prevention of the following:

- Cardiac problems
- Children's health problems
- Asthma and other respiratory health problems

Timing

- Anytime after September 30 launch

Who to Pitch for Coverage

- Local newspapers (main, life or community sections), radio stations (PSA or talk radio shows) and TV news shows
- Publications in your region targeting baby boomers (defined as the generation born between 1946 and 1964), their adult children and parents
- Sample pitch letter included in this kit

Contacts

- Regional contact list included in this kit

Details

- Speakers could include a credible health resource such as a lead researcher or doctor (cardiologist or pulmonologist) and a current or former patient with these health conditions. Could include a regional EPA administrator as well.
- Staging could include the AQI banner, health facts from the presentation included in this toolkit (either displayed or discussed), regional AQI data from EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/airnow and display with the color-coded chart.
- Auditorium, atrium or the front steps of a prestigious health care facility in your region would be a backdrop that reinforces the positive health aspects of expanded AQI forecasting.



Museum

Museums that emphasize health and discoveries in medicine and science are good site possibilities to consider for your regional launch. Many cities are home to children's museums and these are also appropriate launch sites.

The visual backdrop is interesting for the camera and it reinforces both the scientific and the broad public aspects of expanded Air Quality Index forecasting.

Timing

- Anytime after September 30 launch

Who to Pitch for Coverage

- Local newspapers (life or community sections), radio stations (PSA or talk radio shows) and TV news shows
- Publications and media outlets in your region targeting baby boomers (defined as the generation born between 1946 and 1964), their adult children and parents
- Sample pitch letter included in this kit

Contacts

- Regional contact list included in this kit

Details

- Speakers could include the regional EPA administrator, a local well-known regional scientist, meteorologist or doctor.
- Staging could include the AQI banner, scientific facts from the presentation included in this toolkit (either displayed or discussed), regional AQI data from EPA's Web site at www.epa.gov/airnow and a display with the color-coded chart.

School

Children represent a key group affected by air quality, so a school makes a good location for a launch event site.

Timing

- Anytime after September 30 launch

Who to Pitch for Coverage

- Local newspapers (life or community sections), radio stations (PSA or talk radio shows) and TV news shows
- Publications and media outlets in your region that target parents and teachers
- Sample pitch letter included in this kit

Contacts

- Regional contact list included in this kit

Details

- Speakers could include the regional EPA administrator, school principal, school nurse, health teacher or PTA board member. *A child or children who suffer from asthma may or may not want to be included.*
- Staging could include the AQI banner, health facts from the presentation included in this toolkit (either displayed or discussed) and a display with the color-coded chart.
- An announcement on the school's front steps or in the auditorium helps reinforce the importance of expanded Air Quality Index forecasting to protecting the health of children. It allows for local media crews to gather great footage of kids on the playground or sports fields.

Senior Centers/Eldercare Facilities

Older adults with undiagnosed heart and lung diseases are a sensitive group for particle pollution.

For these senior citizens and for those with diagnosed symptoms of heart and lung diseases, the “breaking news” aspect of the expanded Air Quality Index will play especially well if held at a site that emphasizes the activities of older adults.

Older adults at the news conference will be good potential candidates for “man on the street” media interviews. One element of the expanded Air Quality Index announcement is the accessibility and helpful nature of the information.

Timing

- Anytime after September 30 launch

Who to Pitch for Coverage

- Publications and media outlets in your region targeting baby boomers (defined as the generation born between 1946 and 1964), their adult children and parents
- Local newspapers (main, life or community sections), radio stations (PSA or talk radio shows) and TV news shows
- Sample pitch letter included in this kit

Contacts

- Regional contact list included in this kit

Details

- Speakers could include the regional EPA administrator, Council on Aging representative, a credible health resource such as a lead researcher or doctor (cardiologist or pulmonologist) and a current or former patient with these health conditions.
- Staging could include the AQI banner, health facts from the presentation included in this toolkit (either displayed or discussed), and a display with the color-coded chart.



II. Media Tips

Key Elements

Compelling local reasons for coverage – Data or statistics will increase your chances of coverage. Tie your region’s statistics on asthma and your air quality rating (from EPA’s Air Quality Trends Report) to the data included in this toolkit.

Real Local People – Real people are people who are dealing with health problems related to air quality. Reporters want to talk to the people who are impacted by these problems first. You should establish a bank of people who are willing to be quoted and who are willing to be photographed.

Think “Visual” – Offer photos that illustrate visibility of a regional location during healthy and unhealthy air quality times. Provide charts, graphs that can be adapted for a sidebar (print) or for a full screen (TV).

Local medical spokesperson – Appoint a physician who is willing to be part of the story. Make sure he/she is available when the media wants to conduct an interview.

EPA Spokesperson – It would be beneficial if they were available for a media event to give it more credibility.

General Story Pitch Ideas

Pitch a story about a family dealing with their child’s asthma and how the now year-round AQI will be a handy guide to guard against asthma attacks during all kinds of weather. Tie this together with a particle pollution primer that explains what particle pollution is and its effect on the population’s health. The new AQI could accompany the article with an explanation of what each color means.

Since the elderly is a group susceptible to air quality health problems, pitch a story that focuses on a group of active seniors. For example, many communities hold versions of the Senior Olympics. Find out when that occurs in your area and tie that together with AQI facts related to active seniors and present that as a story idea to local media.

Develop story ideas around the seasons, i.e. sports team practice sessions in the fall; sledding and skiing in winter; hay fever season in the spring.

Pitch a story on special projects/educational programs in your area that are providing air quality awareness to children (schools, camps, Boy/ Girl Scouts).