



NYS Public Service Commission

Grassroots Outreach and Education

Sandra S. Sloane
Office of Consumer Services
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Grassroots Campaign:

Program Goals

- Ensure consumers have the information to make informed decisions regarding their utility services
- Increase public awareness and understanding of utility service issues/PSC programs; encourage responsible action through education
- Encourage consumers to participate in the planning and delivery of PSC decisions and programs
- Ensure that consumers know how to get additional information and provide comments on energy and utility service related issues

Grassroots Campaign:

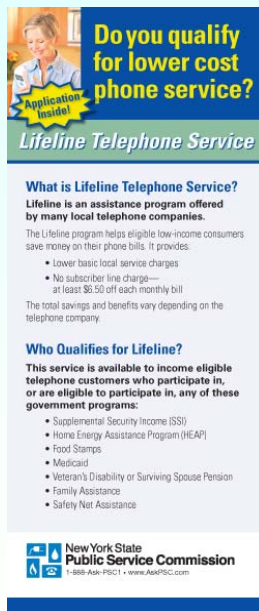
Key Program Elements

- Development and distribution of plain language outreach materials in Spanish and English
- Sponsorship of exhibits at public events and presentations to community groups
- Partnerships with other State agencies, service organizations and local governments
- Consumer pledge program
- Web site and toll-free information line

Grassroots Campaign:

Outreach Materials

- Development and distribution of plain language outreach materials in Spanish and English



♦ Publications

- brochures, tip strips, fact sheets

♦ Collateral Materials

- e.g. pens, shopping bags, magnets
- branded with PSC messages and contact info

Grassroots Campaign:

Events and Presentations

- Sponsorship of exhibits at public events and presentations to community groups
 - ✓ 100+ events, shows and presentations across the State
- Statewide exhibit system
 - ✓ Coordinate messages, graphics and equipment
 - ✓ “Mix and Match” exhibits and publications
 - ✓ Flexible configuration can be tailored to venue and audience
- Event advertising

Grassroots Campaign:

Working with Partners

- Community organizations, institutions, and local and state government agencies that regularly deal with the public
 - ✓ local officials, State legislators, State agencies & their regional offices
 - ✓ AARP, Cornell Cooperative Extension, the New York Library system
 - ✓ Schools and education centers
- Preferably with an educational or social service focus
- Coordinate with agencies whose messages, audiences and outreach efforts are similar to PSC's.

Grassroots Campaign:

Working with Partners

- Targeted mailings of outreach materials
 - ✓ 3,500 representatives of social service agencies, community organizations, libraries and local governments.
 - ✓ 235 local offices of State legislators
 - ✓ 200+ chapters of the New York State AARP
 - ✓ 1 million vehicle owners as part of Motor Vehicle renewal mailing
- Share exhibit space at events or provide materials for partner's to use
- Provide materials free-of-charge to partners

Grassroots Campaign:

Working with Partners

- Partnerships increase the reach and impact of our outreach and education program.
- In conjunction with our partners, Staff distributed the Commission's outreach and education materials across the state
- Organizations were encouraged to take an active role in helping their constituents to learn more

Grassroots Campaign:

Pledge Program

- **Adult Pledge**

- ✓ Commit to program and pro-active actions
- ✓ Top portion of pledge is magnet with PSC messages to take home
- ✓ Bottom portion is entry form for prize drawing

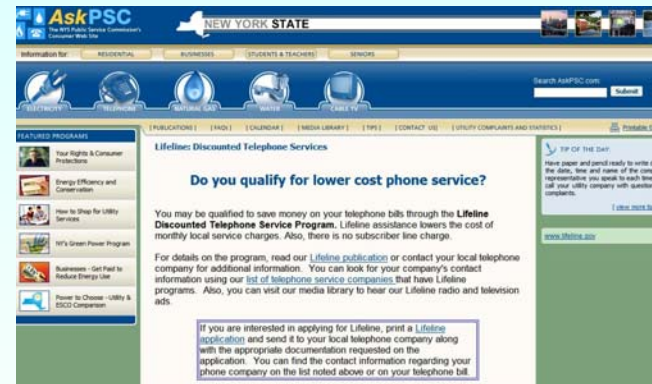
- **Kids Pledge**

- ✓ Fill out card, sign and take home
- ✓ Receive a small prize branded with energy message/PSC contact info
- ✓ Used at events and with school programs

Grassroots Campaign:

Web Site & Toll Free

- www.AskPSC.com Web site
 - ✓ Commission initiatives and programs
 - ✓ links to partner organizations
 - ✓ links to utility web sites
 - ✓ publications
 - ✓ calendar of events
- Toll-free information line (1-888-Ask-PSC1)
 - ✓ gives consumers an easy way to call and request information on utility issues



Grassroots Campaign:

Program Benefits

- Direct two-way communication with a diverse consumer base
- Distribution of Department educational material
- New contacts with community and consumer leaders/groups
- Providing a positive, professional face to the PSC
- Informing people about Department programs that they might otherwise not have learned about
- Receiving feedback and learning about consumer issues that may have to be addressed

Energy Conservation

Case Study

- Energy use increasing every year.
- Price increases for natural gas, electricity and other heating fuels.
- The high cost of energy anticipated to impact all New Yorkers, particularly seniors and low-income households.

Energy Conservation:

Program Goals

- Increase consumer awareness of energy efficiency and conservation issues
- Promote ways that can help consumers use energy wisely
- Promote benefits
 - ✓ reduced reliance on fossil fuels
 - ✓ cleaner environment
 - ✓ lower customer bills
 - ✓ new economic development opportunities

Energy Conservation:

Key Messages

- Consumers can take simple, low-cost or no-cost conservation measures to cut usage
- Consumers can shop for energy efficient products and services
- Consumers can shop for energy supply, including Green Power



Energy Conservation:

Outreach Efforts

- Comprehensive and proactive mass media
 - ✓ Radio
 - ✓ Outdoor advertising
 - ✓ Print
- Grassroots program
 - ✓ Publications/Collateral Materials
 - ✓ Events and presentations
 - ✓ Direct mailings/partnerships
 - ✓ Pledge Program
 - ✓ AskPSC.com and Toll-free numbers
- Cooperative Relationship with Utilities
 - ✓ Work closely to develop complementary and proactive customer education programs

Energy Conservation:

Outreach Efforts

- **Publications/Collateral Materials**

- ✓ *How to Use Energy Wisely*
- ✓ *Rise to the Energy Challenge*
- ✓ *Phantom Electricity Loss*
- ✓ *Household Electricity Use Guide*
- ✓ *Controlling Lighting Costs*



- Events and presentations
- Direct mailings/partnerships
- Pledge Program
- AskPSC.com and Toll-free numbers

Energy Conservation:

Outreach Efforts

- Publications/Collateral Materials
- **Events and Presentations**
 - ✓ *100+ across New York State*
 - ✓ *Home shows, “golden gatherings,” street fairs, NYS Fair*
- Direct Mailings
- Pledge Program
- AskPSC.com and Toll-free numbers

Energy Conservation:

Outreach Efforts

- Publications/Collateral Materials
- Events and presentations
- **Direct Mailings**
 - ✓ *3,700 partner organizations and agencies*
 - ✓ *State legislators*
 - ✓ *One million vehicle owners*
- Pledge Program
- AskPSC.com and Toll-free numbers

Energy Conservation:

Outreach Efforts

- Publications/Collateral Materials
- Shows and Events
- Direct Mailings
- **Pledge Program**
 - ✓ *“Use Energy Wisely” adult pledge with prize drawing for a pack of compact fluorescent lightbulbs*
 - ✓ *“Kids Can Make A World of Difference” children’s pledge*
- AskPSC.com and Toll-free numbers

Energy Conservation:

Outreach Efforts

- Publications/Collateral Materials
- Shows and Events
- Direct Mailings
- Pledge Program
- **AskPSC.com and Toll-free numbers**
 - ✓ *Features energy conservation and efficiency information year round including tips on conserving energy and shopping for energy supply and Green Power*
 - ✓ *Dedicated pages for the summer and winter conservation campaigns*
 - ✓ *Copies of energy conservation publications available*

Energy Conservation:

Looking Ahead

- Evaluate each year's program and build on the "lessons learned"
- Challenges
 - ✓ Breaking through the "clutter" to reach consumer
 - ✓ Coordinating multiple messages such as energy conservation, efficiency and Green Power
 - ✓ Getting consumers to change behavior
 - ✓ Getting the biggest "bang for the buck" with grassroots program

For More Information

- www.AskPSC.com or www.dps.state.ny.us
- 1-888-AskPSC1 (1-888-275-7721)
- Feel free to contact me:
Sandra_Sloane@dps.state.ny.us

Hvala!