Using Social Media as a Communication Tool

Traci Iott, CTDEEP
National TMDL Meeting
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Reflections on Using Social Media

• Learn your agency accounts and procedures
• Typically social media accounts are set up at an Agency, not programmatic, level
• Develop a core group of staff interested in social media & collaborate across programs*
• Work through the challenges of staff turnover
• Can’t replace standard communication platforms but can augment

*Thanks to Melissa Czarnowski, Ali Hibbard, Rebecca Jascot and Meghan Lally for making this presentation possible!
Create A Campaign

• Develop a format that can be reused with new information
  • Easy for public communication
  • Easy to get through Agency review processes

• Using humor to educate
  • “The Most Interesting Commissioner..” for general water education
Create A Campaign

• Keep a document in the public eye during comment period
  • #WaterWednesday: Weekly posts on state Water Plan during comment period
Add to Someone Else’s Public Campaign

• Contribute to public campaign started by someone else, adding insight or connection to your agency and mission

"I regulate the release of water from dams in order to ensure there’s enough water downstream for aquatic life."

"I inspect wastewater treatment facilities to confirm they are being properly operated and maintained and aren’t polluting CT waters."
Get the Word Out

• Announce public meetings, comment or job opportunities

• Recognize someone’s good work
Provide Info on Public Interest Topics

**CT DEEP Water Monitoring**
Published by Lally Meghan | August 24, 2018

It's FieldNoteFriday! This time of year, we receive a lot of concerned inquiries about GREEN WATERBODIES. Green water could be a sign of a CYANOBACTERIA bloom - which can pose health risks - or it could be an accumulation of harmless, tiny aquatic plants.

So, HOW CAN YOU TELL THE DIFFERENCE?? Recite this phrase: 'If it looks like a PAINT SPILL, it could make you ILL... but if it looks like a LENTIL SEED, don't worry - IT'S DUCKWEED!'

CYANOBACTERIA blooms are typically big. See More

**CT DEEP Water Monitoring**
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During the summer months, we receive an increased number of inquiries about blue-green algae blooms and pet safety. Report suspected cyanobacteria blooms as DEEP by sending photos to deepalgabloom@ct.gov.

Dogs can be exposed to toxins by skin contact with water contaminated with cyanobacteria or toxin(s), when swallowing water while playing in the water, or by licking it off fur or hair. While not all blooms are dangerous, if you observe an algae bloom, the best thing to do is prevent your pet from entering that water. Water that has the appearance of pea soup or spliced paint in particular should be avoided. If you suspect your dog has been exposed to a toxic algal bloom, please seek immediate veterinary care.

To learn more visit the EPA page on How to Keep your Dog Safe from Toxins: [https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/protect-your-pooch](https://www.epa.gov/nutrientpollution/protect-your-pooch)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0PMNz3mJdJ

**ATTENTION**

SWIMMING AREA CLOSED

Keep children and pets away from ALGAE.

An algal bloom has made this water potentially unsafe for contact.

YOUTUBE.COM

Protect your pooch from harmful algal blooms

NOTE: If you need captions, please click the CC button on the player to.
Review Feedback

• Many platforms will provide information on public engagement with your posts or websites

• Identify what types of information or posts get the most traffic

• For the previous posts shown, most FB posts received about 300 views except for the ones about public interest topics which had between more than 20,000 views
Infographics

- Visual representation of information
- More pictures, less words
- Efficient, concise presentation of topic
- Focuses on key issues

Can be incorporated into other forms of communication: social media, web pages, documents, presentation
Resources

Free High Quality Images for Commercial
- Unsplash
- Some Flickr (search for commons)
- Pixabay

Free Infographic Templates
- Canva
- Piktochart
- Visme
- IAM – University of Maryland, Images, Videos, Symbols