

Media Relations  
Committee – Report to  
BACWA Board

January 2007

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Manager

**Committee Request for Board Action:**

None

**Business Discussed and Action Items:**

Committee Meeting held January 17, 2007. Items Discussed:

- FOG pitch encouraging people not to pour grease down the sink at holiday time was very successful. Radio coverage and public service announcements (PSAs) ran on KGO, KSFO, KLIV, and KCBS, including several Phil Bobel interviews. The story was also carried in the Fairfield Daily Republic and the San Jose Mercury News online edition. Paid ads on the same topic were run simultaneously on Spanish radio and a 10-12 minute on-air Spanish interview is in the works. This effort was a good example of coordination between BAPPG and Media Relations.
- A letter to the editor developed by the Committee and signed by Chuck Weir ran in the San Francisco Chronicle on December 23. The letter is reprinted below and focused on supporting EPA's decision regarding nanoparticles and the Samsung Silverwash washing machine.

Toward cleaner water

Editor -- We at the Bay Area Clean Water Agencies applaud the EPA's recent decision regarding nanoparticles and the environment.

The Clean Water Agencies want to make sure that the public understands why this recent ruling is so significant. Although there was press coverage of the story, many people may not fully understand the implications nanotechnology could have on the environment. For example, silver, which can be released into the environment by many products, including the Samsung Silver Wash washing machine highlighted in recent press coverage, is highly toxic to aquatic life at low concentrations. Silver can also bioaccumulate in some aquatic organisms, such as clams.

The EPA's decision to regulate these products as pesticides is the right decision for the environment. Too many times, we have seen new pesticides and other products allowed to do significant damage before regulatory action has been taken. For publicly owned facilities that treat wastewater before it is discharged into local waterways, this is an issue of utmost importance. We are particularly concerned about the plethora of new household products that use pesticides for general antimicrobial purposes. In the case of the Samsung Silver Wash washing machine, allowing unrestricted usage of a product that intentionally releases silver into the environment is simply irresponsible.

The EPA's most recent decision on nanotechnology is just the kind of proactive, forward-thinking approach that is necessary to protect the environment.

CHUCK WEIR

Bay Area Clean Water Agencies  
Oakland

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- In an effort to enhance the Agencies' image, the Media Relations contractor will be working to set up meetings with editorial boards for the major regional newspapers. The meetings will focus on how important the Bay is to our region and what the Clean Water Agencies are doing to protect it. We will approach the ed boards using two upcoming regional events as our hook:
  - Water Board workshops for the Municipal Regional Permit
  - BACWA Recycling Committee-sponsored Workshop on public acceptance of water recycling.
- We will do at least one and potentially two Spring pitches related to pesticides. One would focus on the Ecowise program for pest control operator (PCO) certification in IPM techniques. The other would focus on garden tours such as Bay Friendly Gardens. Both pitches would encourage use of IPM and non-toxic products.
- We will develop a set of Spring PSAs focusing on the following topics:
  - IPM and less-toxic products for the garden, referencing OWOW
  - Less-toxic products for the household, e.g. antibacterials and products without triclosan
  - Not overwatering lawns
- The Regional Ad Campaign scope is under development, but no timeline has been established. No ads are likely to appear during this fiscal year.
- BAPPG is planning a regional thermometer take-back event in Spring 2007 with Save the Bay. This Committee will coordinate a media pitch with those events.