Staying Connected
Tips & Tactics for Effective External Communication Despite Social Distance

Tuesday, April 7, 2020
2:00 pm
Thank You for Joining!

Webinar Host & Moderator

Melissa Kuehne
Program Manager
Institute for Local Government
As local officials and staff work through this evolving public health crisis, it remains critical to share important updates, guidance and mandates with your communities.

Today’s webinar will share strategies for consistently and authentically communicating with your community as we adapt to the “new normal,” prepare for the return to standard operations, and anticipate any future crisis events.
Today’s Agenda

Welcome & Overview

About ILG

Presentations by:

- Ryder Smith, Tripepi Smith and Associates
- David Liebler, California State Association of Counties
- Jesse Saich, El Dorado Irrigation District

Panel Discussion

Q&A

Contact Information
• All webinar participants will be on MUTE during the entire call.

• Please TYPE any questions into the question box at any time during the webinar.

• The moderator will read your questions during the question period at the end of the webinar.
Non-Profit, Non-Partisan & Here to Help

ILG is the non-profit training and education affiliate of...

We provide practical and easy-to-use resources so local agencies can effectively implement policies on the ground.
Our mission is to help local government leaders navigate complexity, increase capacity & build trust in their communities
ILG’s FREE Resources

COVID-19

- [www.ca-ilg.org/COVID-19](http://www.ca-ilg.org/COVID-19)
- Local Government Resources
- State and National Resources
- Executive Orders
- Tools and Training Opportunities
- Local Government Response

Leadership Resources

- [www.ca-ilg.org/leadership](http://www.ca-ilg.org/leadership)
  - Information and resources on effective boards & councils, decision-making, responsibilities and powers and more

Public Engagement Resources

- [www.ca-ilg.org/engagement](http://www.ca-ilg.org/engagement)
  - Basics of Public Engagement
  - ILG’s TIERS Public Engagement Framework
  - Partnering with Community Based Organizations
  - Language Access
The COVID-19 Pandemic

As of April 5, 2020, there are a total of 14,336 positive cases and 343 deaths in California.

Ages of all confirmed positive cases:

- Age 0-17: 173 cases
- Age 18-49: 7,099 cases
- Age 50-64: 3,884 cases
- Age 65 and older: 3,129 cases
- Unknown/Missing: 51 cases

Stay Home Except for Essential Needs Order – March 20, 2020

www.cacities.org/Regions/California-Cities

www.counties.org/carousel/resources-regarding-coronavirus-covid-19

www.csda.net/covid-19-resources
COVID-19 Communications

Crisis Response Observations and the Future

April 2020
COVID-19 Clients

- American Canyon
- Bellflower
- Culver City
- Cupertino
- Hawaiian Gardens
- Huntington Beach
- Indian Wells
- La Cañada Flintridge
- Lancaster
- Lomita

- Manhattan Beach
- Rolling Hills Estates
- Tracy
- San Gabriel Valley City Manager Association
- Bellflower-Somerset Mutual Water Co.
- Inland Empire Utilities Agency
- El Toro Water District
The Role of the Public Agency

• Feds - Science and International Mitigation
• States - Broad Baseline Policies and Science and Fiscal Impacts
• Counties - Science, Implementation, Policies, Reporting, Services
• Cities - Truth, Reiterate Facts, Endurance, Life Safety, Trust, Hope, Tone
• Special Districts - Foundational Services for Civilization
COVID-19 Communication Phases

Immediate Adaptation
- Work From Home
- Assemble Team
- Gain Access and Rights
- Determine Tools and Workflow
- Absorb Information

Sustained Messaging
- Implement County Orders
- Explain Rules
- Convey Facts
- Anticipate Questions
- Identify Role of the City

Response to Phase Out
- Backing Off Rules
- Resetting Community Expectations
- Preparing for Second Wave
- Launching Economic Development

New Normal
- Setting Social Norms
- Explaining New City Operations
- Identifying New City Service Limits

TRIPEPI SMITH
Best Practices

- Creation of a COVID-19 portal on your own agency website
- Services Dashboard
- Date and Timestamp Updates
- Making the International Local
- Finding Your Agency’s Lane
- Setting up a Hotline
- Spokesperson Video Message
- Implementing or Extending State and County Policies
- Zoomfest 2020 - The De Facto Platform
- Concern v. Fear
Example Communications

- Manteca Daily Briefings in 3 Languages
  - Manteca FB Page: https://www.facebook.com/pg/cityofmanteca/videos/?ref=page_internal

- Manhattan Beach COVID-19 Portal
  - Citymb.info/coronavirus

- Grover Beach City Manager on Playgrounds v. Parks

- Rolling Hills Estates Mayor’s Address to Public
  - https://youtu.be/uJF9wS0TT3E
Free Coronavirus Resources

Visit our website at: TripepiSmith.com/Coronavirus
The County Perspective
April 7, 2020
The COVID-19 Pandemic – A Crisis Like We’ve Never Seen

• Unfortunately, Crises are Nothing New for Local Government in the Past Decade
  • Devastating Wildfires
  • Floods & Debris Flows
  • Terrorism
  • Public Safety Power Shutoffs
The COVID-19 Pandemic – A Crisis Like We’ve Never Seen

• Impacting all 58 California Counties

• Impacting all 40 Million California County Residents
The Role of Counties During the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Public Health
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety
- Working with Vulnerable Populations
- Public Awareness & Education
California Counties and Crisis Communications

- Counties Have Significant Role in Dissemination of Information Due to Public Health
- The Importance of Accurate and Timely Information
- The Importance of Educating the Public and Media
California Counties and Crisis Communications

• Public and Media are Starving for Information
• They Want Immediacy
• They Want Transparency
Challenges

- Fine Line of Getting Residents to Follow Shelter in Place & Social Distancing But Not Causing Hysteria
- Social Media is the Ticket – But Not All Areas of California Have Strong Internet Connectivity
- Patient Confidentiality – Public Wants to Know Who is Infected and Where They Live
Challenges

• Different Languages – Ensuring Your Audiences Get the Message

• Working Remotely – Ensuring Elected Officials & Key Staff are Properly Prepared and Utilizing Same Messaging
10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

• Work Collaboratively – Within Your Own Local Government and with Neighboring Agencies

• Find the Communication Tools That Connect Best With your Various Constituencies; One Size Does Not Fit All

• Be Visual and Be Simple When Telling Your Story – Especially on Social Media
10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

- Elected Officials Can Play Key Role Though Leading by Example
- Don’t Rush to Get the Information & Messaging Out; Ensure Its Accuracy and Everyone is On Point
- Set Up Internal Communication Methods to Ensure Workflow is Efficient & Not Lost in the Immense Flow of Information
10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

• Show the Positives That are Happening In Your Communities

• Remember the Importance of Human Connection in This Time of Social Distancing & Place in Shelter

• Remember Your Internal Audiences. They Are Concerned as Well and Need Information and Support
10 Tips During This Time of Crisis

• Take Time for Yourself; Your Own Mental Health is Critical to Doing Your Job Effectively
And Remember…

We Are in This TOGETHER!
Communicating with EID’s Customers in the Time of COVID-19
Service area:
220 square miles
EID Customer Numbers

Water ...................... 42,022
Wastewater ............... 23,636
Recycled Water ......... 5,543
Hydroelectric
Recreation
Getting the Word Out

• Customer Newsletter
• Website/eNotification
• Facebook pages and groups
• Regional Newspaper
• Local Groups: Chambers of Commerce
Contacting our Customers

Customer emails on file

- 2010: 6%
- 2020: 80%
Find Your Audience

Facebook Groups offer access to large communities of people.

Message Magnification
Each “conversation” is a public meeting. **Be available.**

Roel Olivares Jr. Has EID considered Suspending Rate Increases or Lowering Rates until the end of this National Crisis? BTW... I really appreciate that you guys are responding so fast.. 😎👍👍

Like · Reply · Message · 1w
Customer Response

Share your gratitude, it fosters empathy in your audience.
A big thank you to all of you at EID. It is sad you need to post assurances that our drinking water is safe from the virus. Given all EID does every single day to ensure our drinking water is safe (and good tasting) I want you to know we appreciate all of your efforts very much.
Questions & Answers
Stay Connected & Stay Informed

Like us on Facebook: @InstituteForLocalGovt

Follow us on Twitter: @instlocgov

Sign up for our e-Newsletter
www.ca-ilg.org/stayinformed
Thank You!

Ryder Smith
Tripepi Smith
626.536.2173
ryder@tripepismith.com

David Liebler
CSAC
916-327-7500
dliebler@counties.org

Jesse Saich
El Dorado Irrigation District
530-642-4127
jsaich@eid.org

Melissa Kuehne
Institute for Local Gov
916-658-8202
mkuehne@ca-ilg.org

www.ca-ilg.org