

## **NADRA Deck Safety Month® PR Toolkit**

*A step-by-step process for getting media coverage*

### **Public relations: A no-cost way to reach thousands of new prospects**

By using basic public relations (PR) tools, NADRA members can get local media to cover NADRA programs they support. NADRA members who have put a little time and effort into PR have reported significant benefits: exposure, recognition, leads and revenue-generating projects. Here are basic steps to working with the media to gain coverage of your award:

#### **Step 1: Creating a media list**

With a simple Web search, research a list of your region's relevant newspapers, magazines, television and radio stations. You'll need to identify a specific contact person, an email address, and a phone number at each outlet. Most media outlets have websites that provide this information. This step takes a bit of legwork, but once it's done you'll have a list to use for future projects.

#### **TIPS**

- For print outlets (newspapers and magazines), identify a local news editor or lifestyle editor
- For broadcast outlets (TV and radio stations), identify a news assignment editor or consumer affairs reporter
- Include business publications, builder association publications and online outlets in your search

#### **Step 2: Drafting a news release**

A news release is simply a document that provides the media with details about an event or story. To complete a news release, simply add details about your award to the news release template provided. During this step, also identify 2-3 photos of your project and/or a picture of yourself receiving the award. Submit photos with the release.

#### **TIPS**

- When communicating with the media, be brief and provide only relevant details.
- Make sure your photos are not too large to email ... 2-3 MB is the perfect size.

#### **Step 3: Sending your news release to the media**

Now, simply email your release to your media list along with 2-3 of the best photos. You may cut-and-paste the release directly into the body of the email and send the photos as attachments. Be sure to include your contact information – phone and email address – in your communications.

#### **TIPS**

- The subject line in emails to the media should be compelling: *“NEWS RELEASE: Local builder promotes national deck safety month initiative.”*
- You should feel comfortable reaching out to the media – you're actually helping them do their job by giving them a newsworthy story idea.
- The best days of the week to send out news releases to gain coverage are Tuesday, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

#### **Step 4: Following up**

This step is critical. Members of the media are busy people who juggle many possible story ideas. Two days after sending the release, follow up. It's perfectly fine to see whether they received your release and have interest in publishing it. You can simply resend the release with a basic query: "I sent this release on (DATE) and am following up to ensure you received this release and see whether you will be using this information."

#### TIPS

- Once again, offer direct, useful information in the subject line of your email.
- Always be sure to include your contact information in your correspondence.

#### **Step 5: Getting the most out of your PR effort**

If the media covers your news, be sure to make copies of coverage and include it any sales materials you may have. Also, post links to any coverage on your website, Linked In or Facebook page. Even if you *don't* get coverage, you can post the release/photos to your website, Linked In or Facebook page. Highlighting yourself as a NADRA member and promoting deck safety awareness can have a positive impact on your prospective customers.

#### TIP

- Once you have your release completed, you can also use it as a blog posting for your company and for your customer and internal newsletters.

#### ***The bottom line***

If you have never tried to gain media coverage for yourself, it can seem a bit daunting. But with the resources provided by NADRA and just a few hours of work, you have the potential to reach thousands upon thousands of readers and viewers. That kind of exposure is priceless – better yet, it's free.