Delivering Best Practices to Consumers: 2005 Communications Strategy

Wendy Reed
US EPA
reed.wendy@epa.gov
Communicating about HVAC and Best Practices

• Where we’ve come from
• What we’ve learned
• Where we are today
• Where we all fit in
• Where we’re going
Where we’ve come from

- Tools and training based approach
- Marketing materials to sell the “box” and system approach in summer – Cool Change
- PR in summer and winter
Where we’ve come from

• 2004 yielded great PR results:
  – Single AP article reached 4M+ in 22 markets
  – 4 min. Today Show story mentioned ENERGY STAR cooling products
  – 850,000+ reached in 4 Hispanic markets with superb print features
  – Radio News Release reached 8M
  – Redbook and Natural Home Magazine mentions: 3.5M+ circulation
  – TV footage picked up by 28 stations, reaching more than 1M viewers
    • Interviews with spokespeople in 6 markets reached add’l 500,000+
What we’ve learned

• HVAC isn’t as simple as “looking for the label” – even with thermostats – not a 30 second sound byte

• A common national vocabulary is needed for “Best Practices”

• (Whole house) Guide to Energy-Efficient Cooling and Heating was needed, and still is
What we’ve learned

• Contractors like information from 3rd parties like ENERGY STAR, but don’t use a lot of templates
• Summer cooling PR works
• We’ve got a long way to go!
  – consumer education
  – stronger HVAC infrastructure
Where we are today

• Best Practices Working Group and communications subgroup
• New communications materials
  – (Revised) Guide
  – Bill stuffer template
  – Home Sealing brochure
  – Duct Sealing brochure
  – Marketing Language
Where we are today

• Revising Guide
  – Year-round use
  – Mentions new construction
  – Find the right contractor
  – Get the right size and a quality installation
  – Maintain your equipment
  – Seal your home
  – Seal your ducts
  – More
Where we are today
Where we are today

• Bill stuffer
  – Maintain
  – Choose ENERGY STAR
  – Get the right size
  – Have it installed properly
Where we are today

- New Duct Sealing brochure
Where we are today

- New Home Sealing “brochure”
- Home Sealing details online coming soon
Where we are today

• What about Cool Change?
  – can use materials for summer outreach, but...
• Summer PR will continue
  – Radio
  – TV
  – Trade publications
  – Consumer publications
  – Newspapers
Where we are today

- Programmable thermostats
  - Covered on both bases
  - Sold off the shelf at retail, so Cool Change works for you!
  - Consider hatching a summer co-marketing plan to present to "EEPS"
Where we all fit in

• EPA provides materials and national PR overlay
  – w/feedback from Working Group on materials

• Manufacturers, Energy Efficiency Program Sponsors, ACCA + distribute materials (sometimes produce own), and spread the Word

• Retailers like Sears, Home Depot and Lowe’s can provide Guide and consumer education
Where we all fit in

• Consider working together on consumer/media education
  – Partner on educational ad placements
  – Build in quotes from other leaders in the working group to support a media kit/pitch
    • share an event, spokespeople, ideas
  – What other unique leveraging possibilities are there?
Where we’re going

• Lest we forget
  – New specification? No specification?
• HVAC is nearly 50% of energy bill – not going away!
• Adaptability is key
Where we’re going

• Next steps
  – Stay in the loop – be on working group calls or just get the notes
  – Provide feedback on Guide – ask me
  – Didn’t receive last Cool Change e-mail? Get on the new HVAC list by e-mailing coolchange@drintl.com (don’t be confused, we just work off of one spreadsheet!)
  – Watch for an e-mail with word of new marketing materials rollout
  – energystar.gov/nationalcampaigns
Where we’re going

- Specific questions/comments?
  - Overall plan – reed.wendy@epa.gov
  - Guide and Marketing Language – Denise Durrett, durrett.denise@epa.gov
  - Bill stuffer – hoffmeyer.dale@epa.gov
  - Home Sealing brochure – anderson.doug@epa.gov
  - Duct Sealing brochure – vonschrader.chandler@epa.gov
  - PR outreach – reed.wendy@epa.gov with Dale Hoffmeyer