

AWARD GUIDELINES

ELIGIBILITY FOR 2026 AWARD

- Open to public water agency members of ACWA.
- All or most of the work must have been executed between **July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026**. For ongoing programs, please submit for one year of program only.
- An agency may submit only one entry per year.
- An agency may not submit again for three years after winning.
- Entries must be submitted electronically by **Sept. 1** of each year. If Sept. 1 falls on a weekend or holiday, entries will be due the following business day.

EXAMPLES OF ENTRIES

Short- and long-term public outreach programs, crisis communications programs, employee relations programs, self-promotion campaigns, customer education programs, legislative outreach programs, agency anniversary campaigns and school education programs.

Note: This award aims to recognize overall communications programs. Individual communications tools, such as a press release or event, should not be submitted unless they are supporting elements of an overall communications or outreach program being entered in this award.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

- Were the objectives clearly stated and described?
- Were the chosen methods appropriate?
- Was the program successful? Does the entry material support the description of the results?
- Were the program and method(s) innovative?
- How well did the elements support the concept? Was it well-organized, well-executed and professional?
- Did the program or campaign increase the agency's transparency to the public? How?
- Was the budget appropriate for the program objectives? Did the program make good use of the available funds/resources?

REQUIREMENTS FOR ENTRIES

1. Program Overview (Max of 1,000 words, not including cover sheet)

The program overview must address the following questions:

- **Objective:** What were the objectives of the program? Describe your agency's goals and desired outcome and quantify, if possible.
- **Method:** Explain which tools, materials and/or events your agency used to achieve your objectives and why they were chosen. Include the role that consultants played in the program.
- **Results:** How did you meet your agency's communication needs? Quantify and qualify your results.
- **Creativity:** How did your program employ innovative communications methods and techniques? Describe any obstacles you had to overcome and the solution.
- **Transparency:** Describe how your program helped increase your agency's transparency.

2. Program Budget (1 page)

Entries must include the total budgeted amount for the program and break out all costs, including donated/in-kind services.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

It is recommended, but not required, that applicants include supporting materials. Examples of supporting materials include press releases, bill stuffers, event photos, videos, websites and social media links.

Applicants may submit a maximum of 10 supporting materials.

**SUBMIT
ENTRY »**

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