Kentucky Lead Workgroup
Communication & Public Education

March 15, 2017

Communication & Public Education

- Overview of current communication
- Identify opportunities for small, medium & large utilities
- Recommendations for communication & public education
- Available resources
Current Communication

Nearly one million news stories - top hits all focus on lead and drinking water

Current Communication

- Much of the current communication primarily focuses on lead and drinking water
- Media attention focuses largely on the water utility/water treatment aspect
- Most Kentucky water utility websites contain little to no information on lead
Communication Gaps

- Lack of a holistic communication on lead (more than drinking water)
- Water utility providers not always positioned as the experts on water quality
- Reactive communication
- Gap in overall communication about water quality/public health

Communication Gaps

- Materials are wordy, lots of text and limited visuals
- Silo communications – lack of coordination in relaying information to the public
- Communication/public education training for water utility professionals
Opportunities

› Create a community dialogue on lead with a foundation on overall water quality

› Includes water providers, customers, health departments, doctors and other key stakeholders

› Develop consistent messages that are easy to locate, visual and available in a variety of formats

Opportunities

› Elevate the overall recognition of water quality/public health

› Develop training opportunities for water quality professionals – fold communication/education into existing training

› Develop communication/education course
Focus on water quality

WATER QUALITY

Public Health

Lifeline to a Community

Use the attention on lead/drinking water to create an overall focus on safe drinking water

Identify Key Stakeholders
Key Stakeholders

Customer Service
Plant Operators
Field Crews
Backoffice
Water Quality

Employees

Creating a local network

From CDC Drinking Water Advisory Communication Toolbox
Delivering the Message

- Identify communication channels
  - In-person
  - Printed materials
  - Website
  - Stakeholder websites
  - Media (traditional and digital)
  - Assets within key partners (bulletin boards, newsletters)
  - State resources (KY DOW, Dept. Of Public Health, statewide campaigns)
  - National resources (AWWA, NRWA, EPA, CDC)

Consistent Message

- Templates/key messages that can be tailored to communities

- National efforts underway:
  - AWWA – customizable materials on general lead information, testing drinking water, plumbing, service line replacements, aerators, etc.
  - LSLR Collaborative – Independent non-profit brought together over 20 organizations to focus on service line replacements
Consistent Message

- CDC Drinking Water Advisory Communication Toolbox – materials can be tailored for a variety of water quality messages
- Kentucky Division of Water – overall information on lead/copper rule in Kentucky
- EPA – overall information lead (sources, poisoning, drinking water, etc.)

Move to a visual message

Text and photos relay an easier to understand message
Summary

- Working with key stakeholders, develop a holistic communication on lead
- For drinking water, develop consistent, visual messages
- Develop communication/education training - look to fold this into existing training