

Getting In Step – Lite (GiS-L) is a modification of the Environmental Protection Agency's *Getting In Step: A Guide for Conducting Watershed Outreach Campaigns*. This modification was developed for those municipal and county staff in South Dakota tasked with developing a storm water outreach for local permitted activities. This document provides the framework to develop a written outreach plan in compliance with Phase II EPA storm water control measures.

The modification was developed for several reasons:

- The Storm Water Outreach Alliance, a network of storm water outreach coordinators throughout the state, received a 319 Information and Education grant to do ancillary outreach. Thus, the activities and funding for permitted activities and ancillary activities needed to be clearly defined. Having a written outreach plan for permitted activities would facilitate development of the ancillary outreach.
- *Getting in Step* was intended for a broad range of watershed outreach; a modification focuses the material strictly on storm water.

Essentially, the steps and elements of *GiS-L* are as follows: look at the water body that receives storm water and determine what are the impairments. If there are identifiable impairments, then those audiences most likely responsible for the impairments will be the target audience for the outreach. If there are no identifiable impairments, then the target audience is much broader and the task becomes how to segment that audience.

After identifying the audience, the process moves on to crafting the message. After the message is crafted, then the focus turns to disseminating the message, specifically how (taking into account both packaging and distribution) and when. Finally, the process concludes with evaluation and reporting.

It is recommended that you work through this document in two phases – alone and with representatives from your audience. The group exercise should focus on crafting the message and refining the packaging and distribution methods.

Recognizing that there are limitations to *GiS-L*, it is hoped that this document will serve as a springboard to the complete *Getting in Step* document at a future date.

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I. About the Water:

1. Name of Water Body:
2. Is this water body listed as impaired by the state or other monitoring agency?
Yes (Go to 3) No (Go to Target Audience A) Don't Know (Go to 4)
3. Yes, the water body is listed as impaired.
 - a. What are the impairments?
 - b. Using best professional judgment and/or available data, are any of these impairments caused by storm water?
 - c. For those impairments caused by storm water, what is the most likely source of pollutants?
 - d. Which of the following groups are the most likely contributors to this pollution?

Group	Pollutant(s)
Homeowners	
Multi-family dwelling owners	
Renters	
Pet owners	
Car Owners	
Business owners	
Construction	
Landscape	
Any business with a facility, shop and/or parking lot (retail, medical, light industry)	
Automotive related (repair, sales, etc.)	
Other	
Government Agencies	
Outdoor Recreation enthusiasts	
Schools	
Teachers	
Students	
Community leaders	
Other	

- e. Go to Target Audience B
4. Check the 2004 *Integrated Report for Surface Water Quality Assessment* (<http://www.state.sd.us/denr/Documents/04IRFinal.pdf>) or the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' TMDL web page. Return to step 2. (<http://www.state.sd.us/denr/DFTA/WatershedProtection/tmdlpage.htm>)

II. Target Audiences

A. Target Audience A

At the very beginning of an outreach, your target audience has the potential to be every one in the community who contributes to storm water pollution. This target is still very large, excluding only groups like apartment dwellers who do not own a car or a pet. To keep your outreach focused, you will need to refine your audience more. This is called segmenting.

Segmenting is usually based on demographics. Basic demographic information about your locality can be found on the US Census website.

<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/46000.html>. Available information about your locality from the Census bureau includes population by ages, family configurations, education levels, home ownership and income levels.

Target Audiences: One of the realities of outreach that is often forgotten, even by experienced outreach coordinators, is that the most important part of outreach is not what you do but rather how people respond to what you do. **The focus of your outreach should be the people you are reaching and not your activities.**

1. Record Characteristics of your city:

Total population:

Median Age:

Family Households:

% family households (related family members living together)

% married couple households

% married couple households with children under 18

% other households of interest or concern

Percentage Owner Occupied Houses:

Percentage Renter Occupied Houses:

Educational Attainment:

% HS diploma

% Some College

% Bachelor's Degree or higher

Median Income:

Other:

2. Who Do You Currently Work With?

Unless you have unlimited resources, one of the deciding factors in who you will attempt to reach is time and money. One way to stretch both is to piggy back outreach efforts onto what you are already doing.

Review the list of potential audiences below. Decide whether you or your office currently communicates with them frequently, infrequently or not all. Communication can take the form of mailers, newsletters, listservs, demonstrations, workshops, talks, face to face contact, phone calls, emails, public service announcements, solicitations, requests for bids, signs or some other method.

Potential Audience	Frequent Communication	Infrequent Communication	Non existent communication
Homeowners			
Multi-family dwelling owners			
Renters			
Pet owners (dog walkers)			
Car Owners			
Business owners			
Construction			
Landscape			
Any business with a facility, shop and/or parking lot			
Automotive related (repair, sales)			
Other			
Government Agencies			
Outdoor Recreation enthusiasts			
Schools			
Teachers			
Students			
Community leaders			
Other			

3. Who Should You Work With?

Even if the receiving water body is not listed as impaired, what is happening in your community that may impact the quality of storm water? Is there a lot of construction? Is land use changing? What potential audiences do these activities point towards?

4. Who Do You Want to Work With?

Which segment of the target audience do you think it is important to reach and why? This might include schools or youth, rental property residents (Section 8 or trailer park residents) or retirees.

5. Putting It Together

In looking at the demographic information, who you are working with, who you should work with and who you want to work with, list two or three (but absolutely no more) segments of the population that you will target.

Segment #1

Segment #2

Segment #3

Go to Message A

B. Target Audience B

Your potential target audience consists of the groups responsible for the impairments listed above in Section I.3. If there are multiple impairments caused by storm water, then you will need to select one impairment. Your selection can be based on the severity of the impairment (i.e. a human health hazard), the ease of reaching the related audience (See Section II.A.2 – Who Do You Currently Work With?) or a combination of these and other factors. With a focused outreach, it is best to limit yourself to one or two segments.

1. Which impairment do you want to address and who are the related audiences?

Segment #1 -

Segment #2 -

Target Audiences: One of the realities of outreach that is often forgotten, even by experienced outreach coordinators, is that the most important part of outreach is not what you do but rather how people respond to what you do. **The focus of your outreach should be the people you are reaching and not your activities.**

Your outreach will be very focused and specialized. There will be large segments of the population that you will not reach, especially during the first year or two. However, in working for a public agency, you may be called upon to speak or present to the community. Even if your target audience will not be a huge part of this event, it is important to stay on target as much as possible.

III. Message

A. Message A – Invite at least two people from your audience to help you craft your message. Compensate them in some way.

There are two main categories of messages for storm water. The first is an **information** message and conveys the concept that rain and snow melt carry pollutants into the drain and out to a water body. With an information message, we are not asking people to do anything other than to understand how storm water impacts a water body.

The second message is a **persuasion** message. This message asks for specific behaviors, i.e. to use no phosphorous fertilizer or cover up bare dirt.

The rule of thumb says that information should precede or at least be mixed with persuasion.

A Local Message. One of the benefits of using local place names and water bodies in your message is that you are literally appealing to people where they live. If the water body is a source of drinking water, is used for recreation, or contributes to the quality of life, then that can and should be referenced in your outreach materials.

1. Will you use an information or persuasion message?

2. What will your message say? What specifics do you want to convey in your message? Rank the specifics. The first one will be your main message, the other specifics will be ancillary points to use during in-depth communications.

Go to Media Plan

B. Message B – Invite at least two other people from your audience to help you craft your message. Compensate them in some way.

The message you want to give your audience is very specific and behavior oriented. **The message must persuade your audience to adopt a behavior.** The information aspects of the message will be secondary to the persuasion. It would be nice if all construction workers understood how bare sediment pollutes water but at the end of the day, the important thing is that silt fences are up and bare dirt is hayed over.

1. What is your message to your audience?

Go to Media Plan.

IV. Media Plan

A & B. A media plan is the nuts and bolts of your outreach. Now that you know what you are going to say and to whom, your next questions are 1) **how** will you get your message out and 2) **when** will you get your message out?

1. How to get your message out: Packaging

Most people get their environmental information from the news: television, radio and newspaper. Your media plan should incorporate working with the news media. This can range from a press release to the local newspaper, an interview on a local radio program, or coverage by a television station.

Under each audience segment, identify which outreach packages you would like to use.

Audience	Segment #1	Segment #2	Segment #3
Package			
Print: Newspaper, free-standing inserts; press releases, guest editorials, letters to the editor, news stories			
TV: PSAs and sponsorships on network, cable, public access; public affairs shows, news stories			
Electronic: Web, e-mail, PowerPoint, CD/DVD, streaming video			
Radio: PSAs and sponsorships; public affairs shows, talk shows, news stories			
Outdoor: Billboards, signs, sides of buses, bus shelters, taxis, window signs, storm drain stencils, kiosks, exhibits			
Collateral – Brochures, direct mail, mail inserts, bag stuffers, bumper stickers, point-of-purchase displays, specialty items (e.g. keychains, mugs, magnets), coloring books, mascots, tray-liners, exhibits			
Events: Fairs, trade shows, demonstrations at schools, libraries and clubs; Water Festivals, speeches, stream and beach cleanings, storm drain stenciling, wetland and rain garden plantings, essay, poster and garden contests, volunteer monitoring			

2. How to get your message out: Distribution

Many of the packages listed above require a plan for distribution. It is not enough to create a brochure; there must be a plan to get the brochure out as well. Likewise, with a web page; how are you going to let people know it is there? If you decide to build a display, where will it go? If you decide to develop a presentation, to whom will you give it?

Newspapers, radio and television have built in distribution mechanisms so planning for distribution is beyond the control of the outreach coordinator. However, since competition for news coverage and public service announcements space is high, it is important to have at least one method of outreach where you control the distribution.

How much is enough? In order to “get the message” a consumer has to see your message on average seven times. With this in mind, consider the resources (time & money) you have to expend on this project. A good rule of thumb is that it is more effective to have a few coordinated complementary packages in terms of distribution and timing than many unrelated packages.

For each method listed above, what is the plan of distribution?

	Means of Distribution
Segment #1 - packages	
Segment #2 – packages	
Segment #3 - packages	

3. When to get your message out

Timing is critical to an outreach. A well timed inexpensive outreach will be more effective than a higher cost outreach where no forethought to timing was given.

1. The outreach should occur when the audience is planning their activities that impact storm water.
2. The outreach message packages should be timed to reinforce each other, especially at the beginning.

Using the calendar below, record when you will distribute your packages.

January	February	March
April	May	June
July	August	September
October	November	December

V. Evaluation

The purpose of evaluation is to learn and record what is working and what is not, both for your audience and in your program.

1. Audience Evaluation

In going back to the beginning of this process, one of the elements necessary to conduct the highest level of evaluation is to have information on water quality. The overarching evaluation question is “Is storm water impacting the quality of the receiving water more, less or about the same?”

Since gaps often exist in water quality data quantity, quality or even kind, the next level of evaluation is to find out the impact of outreach on the audience. Some of these methods tell us more about the impact on the audience than others. The following methods of audience impact evaluation are ranked from “tells us the most” to “tells us the least”:

1. Outside indicators of a change (purchases of non-phosphorous fertilizers, use of “doggie bags” at public parks, increased use of silt fencing, less bare dirt in yards, pre/post surveys of knowledge).
2. Self reported behavior changes or knowledge gains (focus groups, random digit dialing surveys, person to person surveys in public venues such as malls).
3. Audience initiated contact (hits on a website, phone calls requesting information, comments on a guest book)
4. Exposure and reach measures (how many or much of a package was distributed and to whom).

In a perfect world, all outreach would have at least one outside indicator of behavior change as part of its evaluation. However, this type of evaluation often requires more time, money and expertise than might be available; thus one of the other methods of evaluation should be used. At the very least, you should measure exposure and reach. Knowing that you have to measure this may require you to go back and tweak some aspect of your plan to make sure you will have the information you want.

What method(s) of audience evaluation will you use?

2. Program Implementation Evaluation

Tweaking the plan is an on-going process as you implement your program. What you learn doing this stage is part of institutional memory and will to serve to improve the next round of outreach, related outreach or much-in-the-future outreach. It is a good idea to do a report semi-annually, if for no other reason than to keep the information for your final report updated. The questions below serve can serve as a guide for the program implementation evaluation.

1. Are the planned activities being implemented according to schedule?
2. Is additional support needed?
3. Are additional activities needed?
4. Do some activities need to be modified or eliminated?
5. Are the resources allocated sufficient to carry out the task?
6. Did the target audience receive the materials distributed?
7. What feedback has been received?

VI. Putting It All Together: Plan and Report

If you work your way through this document, making changes to reflect your unique circumstance, you will have your permitted activities plan by the time you are done. Use this document as an outline, starting with the receiving water body, working your way through the target audience, the message, the package(s) and distribution and evaluation.

You will also have the elements of any required reporting (audience, audience evaluation, program implementation evaluation) identified.