

CHAPTER 8

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

Introduction

Implementation of the Delaware Climate Change Action Plan (DCCAP) will require the participation, collaboration and cooperation of a broad spectrum of agencies, organizations and officials. In fact, it will require the participation of Delawareans in general. In order to be effective and to be sustained over time, such participation will have to be cultivated. A well-conceived public education and outreach program will be critical to efforts to implement the Climate Change Action Plan. This chapter describes a program for stimulating the interest of the wider public to take concrete actions as contained in the DCCAP.

Goal

The goal of the Education and Outreach Program for the DCCAP is to increase awareness among Delawareans about climate change, its potential environmental, social, economic and political impacts on the State of Delaware, and the need to reduce the emissions of the greenhouse gases which lead to climate change.

In seeking to realize this goal, efforts will be made to articulate and discuss the current state of knowledge of climate change and its impacts, as well as the uncertainties in climate science. It is considered important that these issues are brought to the fore so as to address public misgivings about climate change, as well as to elaborate the need to take action even in the face of uncertainty.

Target Audience

While it is important to reach out to all Delawareans to achieve the stated goal of this program, there are certain groups in the population who, by their daily activities, can make specific contributions in the area of greenhouse gas emissions reduction, and in

developing an ethic of mitigation in the State. Within the context of this State-wide program, therefore, some activities will be specifically shaped to the needs and potential of particular groups of the population, along with those activities that focus on Delawareans as a whole. These target audiences include:

- Policy makers and administrators
- State agencies
- Developers and the construction industry
- Manufacturing, commercial, industrial, agricultural transportation and residential sectors
- Students (all levels)
- NGOs and community organizations
- Financial institutions
- The media
- Delawareans in general

The activities that will be developed for these target audiences are included in the statement of objectives below, and are elaborated as each objective is further developed in the respective components of this program.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the Education and Outreach Program are as follows:

1. To develop and publish a directory of sources of information on climate change, including an inventory of groups and agencies engaged in activities related to climate change;
2. To develop and disseminate educational materials on climate change in keeping with the goals of this program, and to promote the Delaware Climate Change Action Plan throughout the state;

3. To develop a website on the Climate Change Action Plan for the State of Delaware;
4. To convene a series of educational and information exchange forums (seminars, discussions, workshops, etc.) for target audiences and for specialized sectors addressed in the DCCAP;
5. To promote the diffusion of information on climate change in curricula of Delaware's schools; and
6. To develop activities specifically aimed at utilizing the mass media (TV, radio, and press) to help achieve the goals and objectives of this Education and Outreach Program.

A summary of these objectives and details on the activities and methods for achieving them are outlined in the attached Activity Matrix.

Program Details

Objective 1: Directory of Information Sources

Rationale:

An inventory of information sources and materials is one of the first steps to successfully implementing climate change education and outreach goals. Such an inventory allows individuals to locate existing information with relative ease.

This program component aims to create and publish an information directory which would serve as an inventory of existing sources for target audiences as they implement measures and policies to mitigate climate change in Delaware. The directory

will also be used as an outreach tool to further educate individuals on climate change. Such a directory will include website addresses, current publications on climate change, and sources of contact for organizations, which address global climate change. All audiences are targeted.

Activities and Timeframe:

The project activities are divided into four phases: [1] Preparation, [2] Compilation and Publication, [3] Website Publication, and [4] Distribution. The first phase involves the preparation of an inventory of information sources, as well as briefs on various organizations, which provide information on climate change. The second phase is the compilation and publication of the information directory. The third phase works jointly with the website objective. The final phase involves the distribution of the information directory to all target audiences.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The published information directory will be monitored through a structured questionnaire. The number of hits and feedback from users will serve to monitor the usability of the information directory published on the website.

Objective 2: Materials Production

Rationale:

The Delaware Climate Change Action Plan proposes many sector-specific strategies, which could be undertaken in order to mitigate global climate change in the State of Delaware. Given the strategies proposed in the Action Plan, all sectors will need practical information indicating *how* proposed measures and policies could actually be implemented. Thus, specialized information must be provided to target audiences to further implementation efforts.

This program component aims to develop and disseminate educational materials on climate change, which can be of use to each of the target groups during the implementation stage of the Climate Change Action Plan. The materials will be compiled from two sources: (1) already existing information, and (2) newly developed material. The outputs will include fact sheets, technical papers, reports, and other materials. All audiences are targeted.

Activities and Timeframe:

The project activities are divided into four phases: (1) identification, (2) compilation, (3) production, and (4) distribution. The first phase involves the identification of the types of materials needed by each of the target audiences in order to implement the measures and/or policies proposed in the Delaware Climate Change Action Plan. During the second phase, existing sources for material will be consulted in order to avoid duplication of information. Existing material will be compiled and organized in a way to serve the needs of the different target audiences. The third phase involves the production of new materials to complement the existing information. The final phase is the distribution of the materials to appropriate audiences.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Structured surveys and evaluation forms will be distributed to target audiences to ascertain the progress of the materials production project.

Objective 3: Website

Rationale:

Up-to-date information is an integral component in sustaining citizen's involvement in a sustained initiative such as that described in the Action Plan. In today's information age, information accessible electronically plays a key role in disseminating relevant, timely facts to address problems.

This project aims to develop a website on the Climate Change Action Program of the State of Delaware, with the goal of making pertinent information regarding the issue of climate change accessible electronically to the public. This information will include: (1) the science of climate change; (2) actions being taken to address the problem globally, nationally and locally; (3) an inventory of resources and linkages; (4) kits for citizens participation; and (5) a children's section. There are two general target groups: (1) the general public and (2) children (K-12).

Activities and Timeframe:

The project activities are divided into three phases: [1] pre-construction, [2] construction, and [3] maintenance. The pre-construction phase involves the collection of relevant materials for the website. These materials include: (a) the science of climate change; (b) actions being taken at the international, national, and local levels; (c) an inventory of resources and linkages; and (d) educational kits for children. The construction phase involves the actual design and construction of the website. The last phase is the maintenance, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Monitoring and Evaluation Scheme:

The number of hits and feedback from users will serve to monitor the usability of the website. A structured survey will also be administered among targeted groups for evaluation purposes.

Objective 4: Education for Specialized Audiences

Rationale:

This component of the education and outreach program aims to present pertinent information regarding the issue of climate change to specialized audiences through a seminar or workshop format. The rationale is that professional, technical and other groups that may be directly involved in the implementation of the DCCAP, would benefit from educational activities designed to address their particular fields of work. Focused seminar/workshop/consultative sessions will help to meet these requirements.

Two types of audiences are targeted: (1) high-impact specialized groups and (2) the general public. High impact specialized groups include policy makers, developers, industry, community organizations, the media and personnel from the sectors addressed in the DCCAP.

Activities and Timeframe:

The development and implementation of the workshop/seminar activities will occur in three phases: pre-construction, construction and presentation. Pre-construction will involve the collection of relevant materials for the preparation of handouts for workshops. The construction phase will involve the design and organization of materials into a coherent presentation. Presentation will entail delivering this program to the target audiences in the forums that facilitate implementation of the DCCAP.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Feedback from questionnaires distributed at the conclusion of workshops will provide information for evaluation purposes.

Objective 5: Climate Change Education in Delaware's Schools

Rationale:

The schools constitute a pre-existing, formal structure for the gathering of young minds curious to learn about the world in which we live. These young people of today will be the decision-makers of tomorrow and it is therefore important that they are equipped with the necessary tools to act responsibly as adults and as leaders. This component of the education and outreach program is to harness the natural curiosity and enthusiasm of young people by raising their level of awareness and understanding of climate change so that they can act individually and collectively in their schools and communities to help reduce the emission of greenhouse gases.

Objectives:

The aim of this component of the program is to develop information on climate change that can be incorporated into the curricula of Delaware's schools. School children (K-12), teachers and school administrators are targeted.

Activities and Timeframe:

Activities are divided into five phases, some of which may run concurrently. These are: (1) consultations with teachers and education officials to build support for the program and gain the cooperation and assistance of school officials; (2) inventory of courses/curricula to which climate change is relevant; (3) organization of seminars/workshops for teachers; (4) development of teaching materials for use in

schools; (5) creation of school-based activities for children (e.g., competitions). The expected outputs are teaching materials, workshop materials, an inventory of classes/courses, and school-based activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Questionnaires to teachers on the suitability and effectiveness of materials and usefulness of workshops and seminars will be used. Each school-based activity will need a specific evaluation mechanism, with participation used as a measure where relevant.

Objective 6: Education via the Mass Media

Rationale:

The mass media – television, radio, press, billboards – is a powerful tool for transmitting information to large numbers of people simultaneously. Materials specifically designed for these media are useful in educating the general public with little effort required on the part of the recipients. The aim of this component of the program is to design and deliver education/ information to Delaware’s media for dissemination to the general public.

Activities and Timeframe:

A mass media program requires specialized skills and may entail the services of public relations personnel, graphics artists, scriptwriters, or others with expertise in the preparation of media-usable information on climate change. For example, effective materials for use on television may range from documentaries to discussions focusing on specific aspects of the subject to selected interviews that cover a range of perspectives (science, policy, and community action).

The activities for this component will involve the following stages: (1) consultation with Delaware's media to obtain their cooperation; (2) preparation of general and scientific information of climate change and on the DCCAP (materials from components 1, 2 and 3); (3) preparation of information in formats suitable to the mass media (TV and/or documentaries, newspaper articles, graphic arts, etc.); and, (4) broadcast and/or publication of the programs/materials.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Publications and broadcasts should be accompanied by telephone numbers and the website address, to which viewers/listeners/readers should be invited to send their comments and questions. Some programs might also reserve time for telephone calls to be taken "on air." These will provide feedback from which to assess the effectiveness of the activities.