

Turn the Tide to Water Savings

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Executive Summary

This presentation outlines the strategic public relations campaign implemented by the City of Palm Tree Beach in response to ongoing drought conditions.

The Turn the Tide to Water Savings campaign educated residents, motivated behavior change, and exceeded water conservation goals. This case study follows the RPIE framework and demonstrates measurable impact.



Problem/Opportunity and SWOT Analysis

- ▶ Problem: Ongoing drought and new state water mandates required immediate behavioral change among Palm Tree Beach residents.
- ▶ Opportunity: Leverage the City's trusted brand to lead in regional conservation messaging.

▶ **SWOT** Analysis

S Strengths: Strong brand recognition; high public trust; motivated resident base.

O Opportunities: Distinct branding and targeted education to stand out among regional messages.

W Weaknesses: Hard-to-reach audiences in affluent and short-term rental communities.

T Threats: Mixed messages from multiple regional water agencies; apathy among some residents.



Research (Primary and Secondary)

- ▶ Primary Research:
 - Communications Survey (informal, primary)
 - Communications and Media Audit (informal, primary)
- ▶ Benchmarking (informal, primary)
- ▶ Strategic Planning Meeting (informal, primary)
- ▶ Audit of Commonly Asked Questions (informal, primary)
- ▶ Communications and Media Audit (informal, primary)



Research Findings

► Findings:

- 94% of residents expressed concern about the drought.
 - Top-requested tactic: more outreach and education.
 - Traditional and digital channels both critical.
- Situation Appraisal: High awareness with opportunity for targeted action using customized outreach and messaging.



Planning: Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

Goal 1: Raise awareness and increase compliance with state drought mandates

SMART Objective:

- ▶ From June to December 2022, achieve an average monthly water savings of 10%.

Strategies:

- ▶ Develop engaging print and digital campaign materials to promote water-saving practices.
- ▶ Leverage the City's trusted brand to deliver consistent, visible messaging.
- ▶ Use behavior change principles to motivate compliance with mandates.



Planning: Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

Goal 1: Raise awareness and increase compliance with state drought mandates

Tactics:

- ▶ Utility bill inserts and direct mail pieces.
- ▶ Community-wide newsletters and water bill messaging.
- ▶ Paid digital and print ads promoting specific water-saving actions.
- ▶ Distribution of branded door hangers outlining drought restrictions.
- ▶ Social media posts reinforcing state mandates and City-specific rules.
- ▶ Promotional giveaways (e.g., leak detectors, shower timers).



Planning: Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

Goal 2: Deepen resident engagement in water conservation behavior

SMART Objective:

- ▶ Increase participation in the City's water monitoring portal by 25% (to 3,750 users) by December 2022.

Strategies:

- ▶ Promote the City's water monitoring portal as a personal tool for leak detection and water usage tracking.
- ▶ Provide clear, step-by-step educational materials to ease onboarding.
- ▶ Reinforce the benefits of using digital water management tools in campaign messaging.



Planning: Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

Goal 2: Deepen resident engagement in water conservation behavior

Tactics:

- ▶ Targeted social media content encouraging sign-up and showing how to use the portal.
- ▶ Portal login information and how-to instructions included in utility bill inserts.
- ▶ Community workshops and pop-up booths with live demos.
- ▶ Direct mail postcard featuring QR code link to sign up.
- ▶ Incentivized registration via promotional item giveaways.



Planning: Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

Goal 3: Improve message reach and recognition

SMART Objective:

- ▶ Achieve a 30% increase in recall of the “The Turn the Tide to Water Savings” campaign tagline among surveyed residents by the end of Q4 2024.

Strategies:

- ▶ Create a distinctive sub-brand that visually and verbally stands out.
- ▶ Apply brand elements consistently across all channels.
- ▶ Utilize high-visibility outreach formats and trusted news outlets.



Planning: Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics

Goal 3: Improve message reach and recognition

Tactics:

- ▶ Campaign sub-logo and branded design templates for all materials.
- ▶ Consistent tagline use on print, digital, and promotional collateral.
- ▶ Branded presence at events, including signage and giveaways.
- ▶ Media relations: press releases and pitches tied to campaign milestones.
- ▶ Local newspaper and community TV ads featuring campaign language.
- ▶ Banner ads on City's website and homepage rotation.





TURN THE TIDE TO WATER SAVINGS

Every Drop Counts in Palm Tree Beach

TAKE ACTION TODAY

With ongoing drought conditions and new state water mandates, our community needs to come together to conserve water. The City of Palm Tree Beach is here to help you make a real difference while saving money on your water bill.

Join thousands of your neighbors who are already saving water and money!

- Sign up for AquaTrax - Our free water monitoring portal helps you track usage and detect leaks
- Get your FREE conservation kit - Includes leak detectors, shower timers, and water-saving tips
- Learn simple ways to save - Small changes can reduce your water use by 10% or more

VISIT WWW.PALMTREEBEACH.COM
TO GET STARTED WITH YOUR WATER-SAVING JOURNEY.

 **TURN THE TIDE**
@palmtreebeach

Flier



TURN THE TIDE TO WATER SAVINGS

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TAKE ACTION TODAY

 **TURN THE TIDE**

Social Media

Implementation: Audience Segmentation and Message Framing

►Primary Audiences

- Residents, businesses, visitors of Palm Tree Beach.

►Secondary Audiences

- Media, Municipal Water District of Palm Tree County, potential residents.

►Targeting Strategies

- High water users received focused messaging on conservation benefits.
- Messaging adapted for short-term rentals and digital platforms.

►Message Framing

- Campaign voice: friendly, empowering, urgent yet positive.
- Visuals reflected coastal lifestyle and local pride.



Timeline and Key Milestones

- ▶ Late Spring 2024: Strategic planning and research.
- ▶ Summer 2024: Launch of campaign branding and materials.
- ▶ Fall 2024: Implementation of outreach events and full media rollout.
- ▶ December 2024: End of Phase 1 campaign; data analysis and results.



Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

Quantitative Metrics

- ▶ 12.7% average monthly water use reduction (exceeded goal).
- ▶ 15% reduction among high-use customers.
- ▶ 3,000 water portal sign-ups.
- ▶ 25% increase in portal participation (compared to pre-campaign levels).
- ▶ 1,200 conservation kits distributed at events and via mail (20% above goal).



Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

Quantitative Metrics

- ▶ 300+ completed post-kit use surveys, indicating tool effectiveness and behavior change.
- ▶ 32% increase in campaign message recall, per post-campaign resident survey.
- ▶ Engagement rate on water conservation social posts rose by 47% during campaign period.
- ▶ 12 media placements across local TV, newspaper, and blogs with an estimated reach of 120,000.



Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

Qualitative Outcomes

- ▶ Strong resident engagement and media coverage.
- ▶ Positive public feedback through surveys and in-person outreach events.
- ▶ Residents reported a greater sense of ownership in local conservation efforts.
- ▶ City staff expressed improved confidence in answering water-related questions following training.
- ▶ Anecdotal success: Multiple residents shared stories of detecting leaks or lowering their bills using the water portal or kits.



Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Success Factors

- ▶ Consistent and recognizable visual branding elevated campaign visibility and credibility.
- ▶ Multi-channel outreach ensured broad message delivery across digital, print, and in-person channels.
- ▶ Use of data-driven tools like the water portal empowered residents with real-time conservation feedback.
- ▶ Promotional kits and educational giveaways created tangible, lasting touchpoints with residents.
- ▶ Tailored outreach to high-use customers demonstrated measurable results and scalable potential.



Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Opportunities for Improvement

- ▶ Earlier engagement with short-term rental property owners and property management firms would have strengthened reach in a hard-to-target demographic.
- ▶ Stronger cross-departmental collaboration (tourism or business licensing teams) could have improved outreach to non-residential stakeholders.
- ▶ Greater promotion of the water portal at community events could have boosted real-time signups and usage.
- ▶ Campaign evaluation could have incorporated more qualitative measures earlier in the timeline (mid-campaign pulse surveys).



Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Recommendations

- ▶ Continue refining message segmentation for affluent or seasonal audiences, using tactics like geotargeted social ads or concierge-style outreach.
- ▶ Host a WaterWise Open House or showcase event for high-use customers and real estate/property managers to share success stories and promote tools.
- ▶ Institutionalize a cross-functional campaign planning process across departments to align goals and leverage citywide resources.



Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Recommendations

- ▶ Expand training for city staff, especially field staff and front-line customer service, to act as conservation ambassadors.
- ▶ Integrate a feedback loop (text alerts, pulse surveys) to adapt messaging in real-time based on resident behavior or sentiment.
- ▶ Use this campaign as a model for other behavior change initiatives, such as energy conservation or recycling—with the same structure of branding, education, incentives, and digital tools.



Questions?

