



Public Education Program

What is a PEP?

The Vermont Association of Broadcasters (VAB) Public Education Program (PEP), is an FCC & IRS sanctioned program offered by all 50 state broadcasters associations. It is intended to help non-profit organizations and government agencies deliver their messages of public interest effectively & affordably around the entire state using the network of radio and television stations local to each region.

Who uses PEP?

- VT Army National Guard
- VT Department of Children & Families
- VT Commission on Women
- VT Department of Mental Health
- Advance Vermont
- Census Complete Count Commission
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- The list keeps growing!

How Does PEP Work?

50 commercial radio and 5 network television stations from around the state donate airtime to the VAB. In exchange for funding, the VAB makes the airtime available to nonprofits & government agencies who do not have a history of buying radio or TV advertising directly from stations. For every \$1 of funding from your organization, the VAB guarantees \$4 of commercial airtime. It makes limited funds stretch so far that it's possible to reach the entire state with enough frequency to be effective!

How is it different from a PSA?

A Public Service Announcement (PSA) is aired by a station without a monetary commitment and is therefore aired by the station at its own discretion. PSAs are a useful approach for grassroots, community organizations (i.e. churches, small fundraisers) who do not have access to outreach funding or grants and who rely solely on a station's commitment to community service. Airtime for PSAs is never guaranteed, nor do stations offer stats about where, when or how many times a PSA aired.

Where & when will PEP spots air?

All 50 commercial radio stations and all 5 network television stations in Vermont air PEP spots for the VAB on a regular basis. Specific stations, dayparts or programs are not guaranteed in advance since stations participate voluntarily. However, the VAB works diligently with its members to ensure effective coverage. PEP spots are placed ROS (run of station) meaning they can air anytime Monday-Sunday. A 4-to-1 return on investment ratio is guaranteed.

What kind of confirmation is received?

At the end of each campaign, the VAB provides a spreadsheet identifying all the stations the PEP spots aired on, the quantity on each station and the total estimated retail value. In addition, the VAB forwards affidavits (airtime reports) provided by the stations that show the exact dates and times all the PEP spots aired.

Why do stations participate?

Stations voluntarily air PEP spots because they understand funding from PEP campaigns is invested right back into VAB programs & services for stations. PEP funding helps the VAB subsidize professional growth opportunities, scholarships, workforce recruitment, regulatory compliance, recognition events, inspections and other member benefits.

What is the “ideal” PEP message?

Because PEP is not designed to target specific demographics, the ideal PEP message is one of general educational importance to the majority of Vermonters living in every part of the state. Any good radio or TV spot should tell a compelling story and have a motivating call to action. Spots must be tagged with sponsorship information, TV spots must be closed captioned and spots cannot be considered “issue” advertising, which is defined as pushing a political agenda.

Does the VAB provide resources to create and distribute the spot(s)?

Yes. The VAB can assist with copywriting and/or production at little to no cost. The VAB also distributes all PEP spots with an insertion order directly to each station’s traffic (scheduling) department and follows up to ensure receipt.

How do I know if I’m eligible for PEP?

You are eligible to run a PEP campaign if:

- You are a Non-Profit Organization or Government Agency
- You have a message of public interest
- You have not purchased commercial radio or television advertising directly from stations in the last 2 years.

How much does it cost to air a PEP Campaign?

Cost is determined on a case-by-case basis based on two factors; campaign duration and whether you use radio, television or both.

How do you find out more?

Contact Wendy Mays, Executive Director of the Vermont Association of Broadcasters via email at vab@vab.org or call 802-233-0296.

