

**12. SPECIAL EVENTS**

Entries should clearly identify goals/objectives of event, target audiences, evaluation of success, and include all program books, publicity materials, audio/visual materials, photographs or other supporting documentation for the submitted event. *You must complete the questions on this page for each entry and include a high-resolution electronic image (see Electronic Images for details) that best depicts it for publicity purposes. Please be brief, but use as many pages as you feel is necessary to answer the questions.*

CATEGORY 1  CATEGORY 2

**Entry Title: Kaiser Smokestack Demolition**

**Port Name: Port of Tacoma**

1) Was this event planned in-house?  by an agency/firm?  or a combination?

20 Number of staff, including Security (four PR staff) 0 Number of volunteers

2) What was the overall goal/objective of this event, who was the target audience(s) and what were the key messages you intended to communicate to your target audiences? (attach if necessary)

The Port of Tacoma is growing, and as it does, a symbol of our past will be eliminated from the landscape. This was the case with the old Kaiser Smelter, which produced aluminum from the early days of World War II until 2000, when labor issues and rising energy costs shut it down permanently. The Port purchased the property, ideally located near the Blair Waterway for future marine terminal development.

3) What was the overall budget and cost breakdown (research, creative, production, printing, distribution, evaluation) of producing this entry?

Budget Breakdown

- Event logistics .....	\$ 7,000
- Newspaper advertising .....	15,000
- Direct mail .....	5,000
- Project brochures .....	3,000
- Photography / web development .....	5,000
- Event security .....	10,000

Total Budget .....\$45,000

4) Thoroughly describe the event in terms of research, planning, promotion/advertising, implementation, attendance and evaluation of success, and provide an analysis of the event's success in meeting the overall objective.

On Sunday morning, July 2, 2006, at 8:02 a.m. a 500-foot smokestack came tumbling down in the Tacoma Tideflats, marking an early Fourth of July celebration as well as an end to an era. This event also provided the Port of Tacoma an opportunity to educate the public about the changing role of industry in the Tacoma Tideflats, and the continued growth and future expansion opportunities that lay ahead for the Port of Tacoma and for the region's economy.

Aluminum production had been a big part of the Tacoma economy since 1942. At full operation, the Tacoma Kaiser Aluminum facility employed 350 and was capable of producing about 73,000 metric tons of aluminum annually. Aluminum production at Kaiser's Tacoma facility was curtailed in the year 2000.

The Port of Tacoma Commission approved the purchase of the property from Kaiser in December 2002. The Port closed on the property in February 2003. The stack was removed as part of the Port's overall efforts to redevelop the unused 96-acre site that the Port bought from Kaiser. The Port will use the site as part of its future growth and development as a major container port, creating more jobs and business opportunities for the region.

Starting more than a month prior to the explosion, the Port worked to build not only public awareness of the actual event, but also awareness of the future development plans for the site as well. Key elements used by the Port in its public education and awareness campaign included:

#### Pre Event

- Multi-jurisdictional planning – safety and law enforcement
- Newspaper advertising
- Media advisories, news releases and interviews
- Direct mail postcards to area residents
- Flyers for door-to-door distribution to Port-area businesses
- Email notices to target groups and customers
- Informational presentations to key neighborhood councils
- Website announcements
- Intensive pre-event media relations

A special event was planned around the demolition. The public was invited to enter a contest for the right to push the "symbolic demolition plunger" that would bring the stack down. More than 500 people entered the contest, by either calling the Port's event hotline or sending an e-mail.

On the day of the demolition, more than 600 people showed early on a Sunday morning to view the historic event. The Port set up a public viewing area across the waterway from the old Kaiser Plant to ensure both an unobstructed view and public safety. This effort was coordinated with Port Security officers, the Tacoma Police Department, U.S. Coast Guard and the Puyallup Tribal Police.

From a media relations perspective, the event exceeded all expectations. Before the event, the demolition preparation received significant local newspaper, radio and television coverage. The actual demolition and immediate aftermath gained tremendous coverage from local print, radio and television. The newscasts not only found their way to televisions throughout the Tacoma-Seattle region, but found a national audience as feeds of the event were picked up on CBS national, MSNBC and Fox News weekend newscasts.

*\* View enclosed DVD for samples of television news coverage.*

#### Post Event

- News release and photo distribution
- Demolition video, photos and news release on website
- Followup media relations and interviews
- Work with trade press
- Coverage in Port publications (community newsletter and magazine)

Underlying the entire event – and emphasized in all aspects of communications and media relations – was the economic and environmental message that the towering smokestack was a **symbol of an old industry is giving way to growth of the region's new economic engine; a symbol of dirty industry giving way to a clean industry**. At the same time, all respect and reverence was given to the old aluminum smelter and its former long-time employees. In fact – by sheer coincidence – a former Kaiser employee won the contest to push the plunger.

The following is from Port Communications planning documents:

## **KAISER FACILITY DEMOLITION PROJECT: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN**

### **KEY ELEMENTS AND GOALS:**

- 1. EDUCATION:** Inform key groups and individuals about the project:
  - Tideflats businesses
  - Area residents (with special emphasis on Northeast Tacoma and Fife)
  - Local politicians
  - Environmental groups
- 2. COMMUNICATION MESSAGES:**
  - Continued economic transformation of Tacoma's Tideflats economy
  - Port's environmental stewardship
  - Port's continued development, growth, and job creation
  - Basic background on the facility's history in Tacoma
- 3. COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS (additional details below):**
  - Port website
  - Port print publications: *Pacific Gateway*, Port community newsletter
  - Port e-mail newsletter
  - TV Tacoma (via *CityLine* and *Port Report* TV show)
  - Port speakers bureau (special PowerPoint presentation)
  - Media relations
  - Newspaper advertising (local newspapers with combined circ. of 223,475)
  - Project brochure (highlighting site history, cleanup, etc.)
  - Direct mail to targeted businesses/residents
  - Special event for stack demolition (e.g. "Watch us blow our stack")
- 4. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT**
  - Hold a FREE contest for the chance to push the ceremonial button to bring the stack down.
- 5. COMMUNITY CELEBRATION EVENT**
  - Create a special event around the stack demolition that creates an occasion to view and celebrate this community milestone from a safe location
- 6. MEDIA**
  - Generate positive and extensive media (national, if possible) coverage of the project
  - Effectively use local print, radio and TV media to convey key messages
  - Provide excellent access for visual media coverage of event

**KAISER PROJECT PLANNING CALENDAR**

**TARGET DEMOLITION DATE:** Sunday, July 2 – early morning

**JUNE**

***Week 1 (June 5-11)***

- News Tribune article—site visit/interview, June 7—article appeared on June 8
- Development of stack fact sheet

***Week 2 (June 12-18)***

- Wednesday, June 14--Project presentation to the New Tacoma Neighborhood Council--5:30 p.m.—Tacoma Municipal Building— 7<sup>th</sup> floor –Bill Evans and Rod Koon
- Thursday, June 15— Project presentation to Northeast Tacoma Neighborhood Council--The Center at Norpoint, 4818 Nassau Avenue N.E. –Bill Evans and Rod Koon
- Friday, June 16—Port website TOP STORY is posted on stack demolition

***Week 3 (June 19 to 25)***

1. Newspaper ads start running
2. “Blow the Stack” contest is launched
3. Direct mail to local residents starts
4. Port LOBs (lines of business) contact their respective impacted customers
5. Port Security starts contacting local businesses (non-Port customers)
6. Thursday, June 22--Project update is given at Port Commission meeting
7. Media viewing area site is finalized
8. Method for credentialing media is determined
9. Site preparation starts for public viewing area

***Week 4 (June 26 to July 2)***

- All local residents notified
- All Port customers notified
- All local area businesses notified
- All local media contacts are complete, all those planning to attend finalized
- Winner of “Blow the Stack” contest announced
- JULY 2: Demolition
- Followup media and communications efforts, including news release--complete

**KAISER STACK DEMOLITION:  
KEY COMMUNICATIONS TOOLS**

In addition to those goals already stated, the communications efforts surrounding this event will also work to:

- Ensure that local businesses and area residents are informed about the demolition event prior to the event
- Ensure safety for all local businesses, residents, etc.
- Minimize any negative impact or operational interruptions to local businesses the day of the event
- Encourage people to STAY AWAY and view the event via TV
- Provide media with a special area for special viewing access (for TV cameras, newspaper photographers, etc.)
- Provide at least one safe viewing place for the public

Communication tools included:

**1. Port website**

A *TOP STORY* posted on the home page of the Port's website (mid-June) provided highlights of the Kaiser demolition project, including the overview of the plan for the stack demolition.

**2. Media relations**

Working with the local media a key factor in keeping citizens informed about the stack demolition and encouraging them to watch it on TV.

**3. Newspaper advertising**

A newspaper ad ran in local newspapers, providing basic information on the project and the event. It encouraged people to enter a free contest for the chance to push the ceremonial plunger that will bring the stack down. The ad ran in the News Tribune, Federal Way Mirror, Tacoma Weekly and Pierce County Business Examiner. Ads ran over the last two weeks of June. (total combined circulation: 223,475)

**4. Contest**

The chance to push the ceremonial plunger that will bring down the Kaiser smokestack was publicized through newspaper ads, PR-generated articles and the Port's website. The winner was announced at the end of June, generating additional media coverage.

**5. Direct mail to local residents**

This postcard from the Port was be mailed out the last week of June. Based on the newspaper ad, it directed recipients to the Port's website and the phone hotline for most current information.

**6. Contacting Port tenants**

Each Port LOB (line of business) was in charge of contacting its respective customers concerning this event. Port Communications developed a fact sheet to help LOB representatives provide accurate information.

**7. Contacting other Tideflats businesses**

Other businesses located in the area of the Kaiser site were contacted on a door-to-door basis by Port Security officers, who handed out flyers with demolition information, including anticipated road closures.

**8. Stack hotline phone number**

A phone number with a brief recording provided the latest information, including how to enter the contest.

**9. Project brochure**

Developed by the Port's Communications Department, this brochure highlighted some of the history of the site as well as the stack demolition work.

**10. Local Government contacts**

The Port's Governmental Affairs Department took the lead in contacting local governments, such as the City of Fife, City of Puyallup, neighborhood councils and the Puyallup Tribe, to make sure they are informed about the event.

**11. Port Publications**

Following the event, Port publications – Pacific Gateway magazine, the community newsletter and the monthly email newsletter – each contained stories about the demolition.

**12. Port speakers bureau**

Special presentations were offered to community groups and neighborhood councils to update them on the stack demolition, environmental aspects of the Kaiser plant demolition and recycling, and to emphasize the community economic benefit of converting the old smelter into a marine terminal.