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**TO:** Prospective Bidders  
**FROM:** Sara O'Keefe, Communications Manager  
**DATE:** January 26, 2005  
**RE:** Request for Proposal: Comprehensive Public Awareness & Education Campaign

## **I. Introduction / Overview**

The Regional Air Quality Council (RAQC) – the lead air quality planning agency for the seven-county, metropolitan-Denver region – is requesting the services of a professional agency to help with the development of a comprehensive public awareness and education campaign in order to educate the public on issues related to ozone pollution.

Despite many air quality accomplishments over the past 25 years, the Denver region now has a new air quality challenge – ozone pollution – which threatens the region's clean air status. If the region cannot address the issue proactively over the next three years, additional air quality requirements will be imposed.

The Denver region has been monitoring its status with the ozone standard and has monitored levels perilously close to the standard over the years. Elevated ozone levels in 1998 resulted in the RAQC implementing its initial Voluntary Ozone Reduction Program in 1999. High levels recorded again in 2002 and 2003 pushed the region over the standard and put the region at risk of being designated nonattainment by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency if additional steps were not taken.

As a result of the significant consequences facing the region, ozone has now become the Denver region's top air quality priority and challenge. The timeframe between 2005 and 2007 is critical and dedicated federal funding will allow the RAQC and its partners to launch a large-scale advertising, outreach, and education campaign to complement its existing and future strategies.

In the fall of 2003, the RAQC's planning process identified a need for much greater public outreach and education on ozone pollution. Increased citizen understanding and awareness of the causes and solutions for ozone pollution is an important element of the RAQC's overall ozone reduction strategy.

While the RAQC's past outreach efforts have been effective in bringing together stakeholders and identifying ozone reduction strategies, it has struggled with raising overall awareness due to the budget constraints under which it has operated since the program's inception in 1999. With the addition of Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality grant funding, the RAQC and its partners will be able to dramatically increase its public education and outreach efforts.

The proposed "Keep It Clean" Outreach and Education Program encompasses large-scale outreach, advertising, education, and evaluation components in order to raise public awareness and education about ozone issues and increase the number of people undertaking voluntary ozone reduction steps.

The RAQC has assigned two main staff members to oversee its outreach and education efforts over the next year. Sara O’Keefe, communications manager, and Sarah Schmitz, communications coordinator, will be available to assist the selected agency with all aspects of the scope of work, as described below.

## II. Description of Need / Scope of Work

Based on experiences in other areas of the country that have dealt with ozone problems for a number of years, an effective and expansive public outreach program is critical in raising awareness and educating citizens. Paid advertising has shown to be one of the most effective ways in raising awareness and affecting behavior change. Program managers in other states and local areas identified paid advertising as the most effective element of their respective programs. The RAQC plans to engage in a full-scale advertising campaign as part of its overall effort.

In addition to media advertising and outreach, the RAQC’s three-year program will increase outreach and assistance to local government public information staff as another means to reach citizens throughout the region. In specific, the RAQC is pursuing a contract with a full-service public relations/marketing agency to assist with implementing a full-scale effort. The RAQC’s two main goals include **(1) raising public awareness about issues related to ozone pollution and (2) increasing the number of people who take action and change habits due to targeted outreach and advertising messages**. In order to reach these two main goals, the RAQC anticipates needing the following services:

- a. *Strategic Plan* – a plan outlining the overall strategy for increasing public awareness about ozone-related issues and affecting behavior change related to the education and outreach components of the program. The written plan should encompass a narrative explaining the strategy for logo/slogan development, news media outreach, targeted paid advertising, event planning and promotion, web site enhancement, and materials development. The plan should take into consideration ideas from the Ozone Outreach, Information, and Education Advisory Committee – a newly-formed group of public information and communications specialists who will provide oversight, recommendations, and approval of all materials related to outreach and education activities. The selected agency will be invited to participate regularly in the group’s regularly-scheduled monthly meetings.
- b. *Logo / Slogan Development* – the development of a logo and slogan that will successfully and aesthetically represent the program’s goals and objectives. Ideally, the selected agency would develop three to five options from which the Ozone Outreach, Information, and Education Advisory Committee could make a final selection.
- c. *News Media Outreach* – a strategy to inform and educate news media about the issues in order to foster support for events as well as encourage the use of materials and graphics on news web sites and during news broadcasts as a means of reaching the public. In addition, the RAQC would like assistance with approaching the major television news agencies to determine the feasibility of a sponsorship for all events and advertising.
- d. *Paid Advertising* – assistance with targeting specific and successful advertising mediums, such as radio, print, and theater. In addition, the RAQC requests assistance with negotiating contracts for paid advertising and the development of radio scripts, print layouts, theater slides, and any other items needed for the program’s advertising efforts.
- e. *Event Planning and Promotion* – assistance with planning, promoting, and implementing the RAQC’s two main public outreach events: (1) Car Care Fairs for Cleaner Air and (2) Mow Down Pollution Lawn Equipment Exchange. The first event – scheduled for April (National Car Care Month) – will provide 25 metro-area locations in which motorists will receive free, visual vehicle inspections by NAPA-certified technicians. The event will educate motorists on the importance of vehicle

maintenance and provide them with information on how to keep vehicles running as efficiently as possible.

The second event – scheduled for May – will provide 10 to 12 metro-area locations in which homeowners can turn in gasoline-powered lawn equipment in exchange for large discounts on zero-emission battery and electric alternatives. The RAQC will team up with Black & Decker and a large home improvement retailer to host the events.

- f. *Web Site Enhancement* – a written plan with suggestions on how to enhance the navigation and aesthetic appeal of the RAQC’s current web site. The budget may not allow for a complete makeover; however, the RAQC has a staff member to make changes suggested from a professional review of the current site.
- g. *Materials Development* – assistance with the artistic and written development of materials needed for the promotion of public events, press conferences, paid advertisements, and other items as needed. Major printed items should be developed in both English and Spanish languages. All materials, messages, and artwork related to the campaign will become the property of the Regional Air Quality Council.

To date, the RAQC has not had available funding to conduct public opinion research in order to determine whether past outreach and education efforts have been successful in persuading citizens to take action to reduce ozone-related activities. However, the RAQC – as part of its overall ozone efforts – will be hiring a professional public opinion agency to conduct research over the next three years. The results from the study will be readily available to the selected public relations/marketing agency to use in determining advertising messages and audiences.

### III. Schedule of Events

Date	Event
January 26	RFP Release
February 9	Last day for written and verbal questions
February 18	Proposals due no later than noon
February 18-23	Proposal review by selection committee
February 24	Presentations to selection committee from three top-scoring selected agencies
March 3	Selection by RAQC
March 15	Approximate date selected agency begins work

### IV. Required Proposal Content

Please provide the following information in the listed order. Proposals should be no longer than **10 pages, not including the budget**. Artwork and other attachments are allowed. Original submittals should be accompanied by 12 unbound copies for the review committee.

- a. **Contact Information** – please provide the name, title, mailing address, phone and fax numbers, and e-mail address for the main point of contact for this project.
- b. **Background and Experience** – please provide a brief summary on the company’s background and experience related to topic. If the agency does not have any specific related experience, please describe experience with other environmental and/or governmental public education campaigns. In addition, please provide a list of recent clients and three references that may be contacted to discuss related work.

- c. **Staff Biographies** – please provide brief descriptions (one to two paragraphs) of professional experience on key personnel expected to work on the project.
- d. **Narrative** – please provide a descriptive narrative on how your agency will meet the two key goals – described in Section II – by addressing each of the listed needed services (strategic plan, logo/slogan development, news media outreach, paid advertising, event planning and promotion, web site enhancement, and materials development). This section should make up the majority of the proposal. Please provide any artwork or materials as attachments rather than as part of the narrative section.
- e. **Budget** – the RAQC and its partners have budgeted approximately **\$550,000** for its outreach, education, and advertising efforts for **2005**. This program is a three-year effort; the tentative budgets for **2006** and **2007** are approximately **\$300,000** and **\$285,000**, respectively. The budgets for all three years may be increased if additional funding is secured. The contract with the selected agency for year one will be reviewed at the end of 2005 to determine whether or not to award the agency a contract for work expected in 2006.

Please provide a proposed detailed budget for year one, using the amount of \$550,00, including a line item for a retainer cost from March through August as well as estimated costs for advertising, materials, graphic work, and any other expected expenditures. The RAQC has allocated additional funding for other contractors to supply services and other items as needed, such as printing, promotional items, etc. The final budget and line item expenditures will be determined in the contract with the selected agency; however, the proposal budget should not exceed \$550,000.

- f. **Submittals** – your original proposal and 12 unbound copies should arrive to the below address no later than **noon on Friday, February 18, 2005**:

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**V. Review Process**

Proposals will be reviewed by the Ozone Outreach, Information, and Education Advisory Committee consisting of, but not limited to, representatives of the following agencies:

Regional Air Quality Council  
 American Lung Association of Colorado  
 City and County of Denver, Department of Environmental Health / Public Information  
 City of Federal Heights  
 Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Air Pollution Control Division  
 Denver Regional Council of Governments, Public Information and Communications  
 Envirotest Systems Corp. (Air Care Colorado), Public Information  
 National Jewish Medical and Research Center

The Advisory Committee will be selecting the three top-scoring agencies to make 40-minute presentations to the Committee on Thursday, February 24. A final decision will be made and announced the following week.

**VI. Contract Terms and Conditions**

The contract will begin as soon after March 3 as possible, but no later than March 15 and will continue through the end of the year, at which time the contract will be subject to review. The contract may be extended for work in 2006, depending on the level of satisfaction with the provided services as well as future funding capabilities. However, the RAQC's ultimate goal is to continue its enhanced outreach and education program through the end of 2007. The RAQC and the selected agency will work out the details of the contract upon Board approval.

**VII. Attachments**

Attached is the RAQC's Work Plan, which outlines its preliminary plans for media advertising and outreach, citizen outreach, local government and outreach, and analysis and reporting. It may be used as a guide in developing proposals.

**VIII. Questions**

In order to address fairly any questions related to the Request for Proposal and its specific content, both written and verbal questions will be taken until **5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9**. For written and verbal questions, please contact:

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