



LIST OF STORY IDEAS TO BE PITCHED TO LOCAL MEDIA OUTLETS

Story ideas are similar to “news hooks,” which are explained in the *Effective Ways to Pursue Media Coverage* document. Quality story ideas are those that the media would consider to be newsworthy. They often revolve around a regional or national event, but have a local focus. Newsworthy story ideas also must have a human interest content to grasp the reader’s, viewer’s or listener’s attention.

Telling a reporter about a story idea is called “pitching” it. When pitching a story idea, remember to be brief and get right to the point. Look for other tips on dealing with the media in the *Effective Ways to Pursue Media Coverage* document.

The following are potential story ideas that you can pitch to your local media:

- School’s out for summer – a story relating to the close of schools for the year and how children will be home more often and around natural gas appliances. Include tips on how to keep children safe around these appliances, and how to teach children natural gas safety.
- Benefits of natural gas appliances – a story describing pros and cons of natural gas appliances versus others.
- Grilling season – a springtime story about the start of grilling season and the important factors to consider when purchasing a natural gas grill. Include safety tips for grilling.
- Winter heating – tips for the best ways to heat your home efficiently using natural gas and why it’s important to get your fuel-burning heating system inspected this time of year.
- Year-round energy efficiency – describe a program that your company has to promote responsible use of energy.
- Utility assistance programs – describe the program your company has that assists those in need with paying for utilities (ex: budget billing). Then, find a family or individual that the program has helped, to give the story a “face.”
- Spin-off national news – keep close tabs on the national news for any legislation or events happening that relate to your product. Offer to be a local spokesperson regarding the issue.
- Leak recognition and response – this is a story that can be pitched anytime, but is more likely to be picked up if it’s pitched after a natural gas incident in Ohio or surrounding state. Offer to be a local spokesperson on natural gas safety, and give tips on leak recognition and response.
- Unauthorized digging – a spring or summertime story reminding the public to be careful when doing yard work. Unauthorized digging from gardening, building fences or installing ponds or in ground swimming pools runs the risk of hitting utility wires or natural gas pipelines. This can be prevented by calling OUPS.