



## Public Relations Tool Kit

Participating in Communities in Bloom brings many benefits and will benefit your community. It's good news, so why not make sure people hear about it? Being proactive in communicating throughout your participation in the program will –

- Earn recognition and support for the program
- Win appreciation from your elected representatives
- Encourage community involvement
- Increase the effectiveness of your efforts
- Result in an overall better outcome – more blooms and a better rating from judges!

### Guide to CiB Public Relations (PR)

This kit has been designed to help you promote your community's involvement with Communities in Bloom. Throughout the program you will find there are key milestones that will be of interest to the media. These opportunities include –

- Decision to participate/registration in the program
- Campaign kick off or launch activity
- The 8 Criteria – profiling the Communities in Bloom Program
- Getting ready for judging
- When the Judges are in town
- Results! Share the outcome

As you prepare your community for judging there will no doubt be other opportunities to interest the media in helping you promote your efforts. This kit provides the following tools to help you engage the media's interest and ensure members of your community can share in the excitement of being a Communities in Bloom participant.

- Suggested activity calendar/key milestones and news angles
- Potential photo opportunities
- Other promotional opportunities
- Template media advisory to invite media to cover your event
- Template news release to tell the media your news

# PUBLIC RELATIONS TOOL KIT

## **Program Milestones are Newsworthy!**

The following are examples of highlights of the Communities in Bloom program that will be newsworthy in your community:

Program announcement – news release to media informing them of your community’s decision to compete and outlining the program details, criteria.

Campaign kick off – a creative event and photo opportunity to officially “kick off” your community’s participation. Invite a troop of cub scouts to clean up a park. Ask your Mayor to proclaim a Communities in Bloom day. Or simply invite media to hear members of your CiB Committee or local horticulture society or gardening club describe the program and its benefits. Visit the LIN site for more kick off ideas!

Profiling the Program – Offer your local media weekly news stories for eight weeks in which you provide details on each of the Eight Criteria. Then tell them how your community is preparing for judging on each aspect.

The Judges are Coming! The Judges are Coming! – Announce a clean up or neighbourhood beautification week ahead of the arrival of your judges. Challenge everyone to be a part of making your community a winner. Hold a contest for the most beautiful street, schoolyard or business improvement area. Engage your community!

They’re Here! – Treat your judges like celebrities. Invite the media to come and interview and photograph them while at work.

Thank you to sponsors and volunteers – Recognize the contribution of your local sponsors and the involvement of your volunteers

And the winners are ... No matter what the outcome, share the results of all of your efforts. Announce the number of blooms you are awarded. If you win a Criteria Award, invite the sponsor to come and present it at a local news conference, to Council or to your volunteers and invite the media to cover the presentation.

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## Photo Opportunities

Television and newspapers need a steady supply of interesting images to bring their news coverage to life. Invite them to –

- Campaign kick off event
- Community clean up
- Planting day with volunteers
- Hanging baskets going up on a main through-fare
- CiB information session or workshop for volunteers
- Judges touring your community
- Planting a tree with the Mayor or members of Council
- *And you will want to add more – you most certainly have a ton of examples ...*

## Other Media/ Promotional Vehicles

- Special inserts or special sections in community or daily newspapers
- Radio talk show discussions or call in shows
- Local news programs
- Municipal billing insert
- Community newspaper ads
- Municipal newsletters
- Council proclamations

## Templates:

You will find enclosed templates for Media Advisory and News Releases

## Share the good news

We want to know how you are supporting the program and engaging citizens in your community ....and we can post the good news on our website.

Please share your news with Communities in Bloom by sending us your media advisories, news releases and media coverage:

- by fax at (514) 694-3725
- by e-mail at [bloom.fleurs@sympatico.ca](mailto:bloom.fleurs@sympatico.ca)

*Thank you to Jill Fairbrother, Director of Stakeholder Relations, Scotts Canada for providing guidance on this document*

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## Template Media Advisory

Using the following layout and headings, insert your own information and details and send the information to media when you want to invite them to cover an event or photo opportunity.

### MEDIA ADVISORY

(Community name) Kicks Off Communities in Bloom Program/Competition  
With (insert name/description of activity)

*Sample headline: Bloomsville Mayor Kicks Off Communities in Bloom Program with Boy Scouts Clean Up Day*

Date: of your event

Time: from when to when, noting time of any remarks, ribbon cutting or other key happenings for journalists and photographers

Place: location with intersection, directions as necessary

Details: describe what will happen and list VIPs or special guests of interest to media – include children, celebrities, mascots, and others of general interest or visual appeal.

*Sample*

*Details: Mayor Daily will join the Bay Street Boy Scouts troop for a tree planting and park clean up this Saturday to kick off Bloomsville's participation in the Communities in Bloom (provincial/national/international) competition.*

Background: Communities in Bloom is a Canadian beautification program that provides information and education, and awards Bloom Ratings for achievement in the areas of floral displays, landscapes, turf, urban forestry, community involvement, heritage, conservation, environmental awareness and tidiness. This volunteer-based non-profit organization fosters civic pride, environmental responsibility and beautification through community participation and the challenge of national competition.

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For more information please contact: Insert name of local program contact person for media inquiries.

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## Template News Release

Inserting your own information, use this format to provide media with the details of a newsworthy event or development in the program as the competition unfolds.

### NEWS RELEASE

#### For Immediate Release

#### Headline

*Sample headline: Bloomsville To Participate in National Communities in Bloom Competition*

Bloomsville, Province – Monday, January x, 2007 – Mayor (or other) Daily today announced that the City of Bloomsville will participate in the 13<sup>th</sup> edition of the Communities in Bloom national competition. This is the X year that Bloomsville has participated in the Program.

Communities in Bloom is a Canadian beautification program that provides information and education, and awards Bloom Ratings for achievement in the areas of floral displays, landscapes, turf, urban forestry, community involvement, heritage, conservation, environmental awareness and tidiness.

Bloomsville's participation will be led by (name of program director or coordinator) with the support of (insert name of committee, volunteer groups, etc.). Throughout the spring and summer, volunteers and staff will work to beautify our community by (insert list of activities, plantings, clean ups, turf care, etc.).

*Insert Quote- Sample: "Our community is dedicated to improving our natural environment and beautifying the spaces in which we live and work for all who live in Bloomsville," said (insert name and title). "As we prepare for judging in the Communities in Bloom competition, we need the help of every business, every school group and every neighbour to ensure we do ourselves proud."*

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