

# How to Write a Media Alert

*Print on Library Letterhead*

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**MEDIA ALERT –**  
Month Day, Year

Contact: Name  
Library, Phone number  
E-mail address

## **HEADLINE, BOLD TYPE, CENTERED**

A media alert is a “who, what, where, when, why, how” outline of a newsworthy event or announcement. It is appropriate in the following circumstances:

- The news it outlines is extremely timely and you need to get the information to the news media as quickly as possible.
- You are sending the alert as a reminder of a previous, very important news release.
- The information is for a calendar listing or event.

A media alert generally is faxed or e-mailed to newsrooms/or community calendar editors. Media advisories are short and to the point – not more than one page. A media alert begins with the most important information (often the “what”) and then moves to the second-most important area (often the “who”) and so on.

After the heading, arrange the information something like this:

**WHAT:** Describe what it is that’s going on.

**WHO:** Talk about your organization and its role. Or, list the people who will be attending or are invited to an event or participating in an activity.

**WHEN:** Provide the date and time.

**WHERE:** Include very specific location information, including street address and directions if necessary.

**WHY:** Give the relevance here. Why is this important in your community or to your organization?

**HOW:** If applicable, provide information on how people can register, get involved, donate, etc.

**MORE:** The last paragraph of every release and alert should be a “boilerplate” about your program/library. A “boilerplate” is a basic brief statement that describes your program/library and acknowledges its supporters.

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