

Writing a *Letter to the Editor* (LTE) to your local or regional newspaper provides an outlet for elected officials, regulators, and the public to consider important, personal viewpoints on proposed projects, existing operations, and proposed expansions of facilities in your community, in the region, and throughout the state. Elected officials designate staff members to read local and regional publications with an eye for personal opinions from those living in communities directly impacted by current and proposed operations – including operations that have or may emit pollutants into the air or discharge pollutants into local waterways. **Your opinion truly matters and you should consider voicing your concerns, publicly.**

Writing an LTE is easy – Here are some general pointers to get you started:

- Each newspaper has word limits for Letters to the Editor – check with your local or regional newspaper for their word limit. Most limits range from 150 to 200 words, or less. Be as specific as possible in as few words as possible.
- Your LTE should be timely - it will have a better chance of being published if it is timely.
- Use facts, personal thoughts, and opinions.
- Remind elected officials that all decisions must include more than just economic considerations. All communities – workers and those who live along the fence line and within the air and watersheds – deserve both jobs AND health protections.
- Express the need for more public notice and participation opportunities – how and why this would be helpful to you and your community.
- Urge elected officials to protect people, not polluters.
- Be polite and factual – never threaten or use harsh language.
- If you are responding to an article previously published in that same newspaper, include the title of the article and the date as a reference.
- **Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number – all newspapers have a policy to obtain verification that you are the person submitting the letter.**

Helpful hints on writing Letters to the Editor from several newspapers:

Some newspapers' webpages include good suggestions and further pointers on how to submit your LTE for consideration – and how to increase the chances of your LTE being published.

Here are several good examples of what newspapers look for:

- The Morning Call - <http://www.mcall.com/all-howtoletter-story.html>
- The Philadelphia Inquirer - http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/inq_ed_board/Tips-for-Inquirer-letter-and-commentary-writers.html

Contact:

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Locating information on your local or regional newspaper:

Find your local and regional newspapers using the link provided below. Once you've clicked on the appropriate link, you can search that newspaper's site for *how to submit a letter to the editor*: <https://www.w3newspapers.com/usa/pennsylvania/>

If you have trouble locating the page on "How to Submit a Letter to the Editor" you can also try searching for the Contact Us section – and look for information on submitting a letter to the editor.

Quick list of Pittsburgh and Philadelphia newspapers:

The Beaver County Times: timesletters@timesonline.com

Mail written letters to:

Your Opinion
The Times
400 Fair Avenue
Beaver, PA 15009

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: letters@post-gazette.com

Mail written letters to:

Letters to the Editor
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette
358 North Shore Drive, Suite 300
Pittsburgh, PA 15212

For more background on submissions to the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: <http://www.post-gazette.com/opinion/2014/03/04/Post-Gazette-opinion-FAQ/stories/201403040169#letters>

Washington County, Observer Reporter: <http://or.formstack.com/forms/orlettertoeditor>

Or mail to:

Editorial Page Editor
Observer-Reporter
122 South Main Street
Washington, PA 15301

Philadelphia Inquirer: http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/inq_ed_board/Tips-for-Inquirer-letter-and-commentary-writers.html

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