



Some Tips for Writing Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor are a terrific way of letting newspaper editors, decision makers, and the public know how you feel about an issue. By writing letters to the editor, you can help drive public discussion and shape public policy regarding an issue. Below are some tips to increase your chances of having a letter printed.

1. Be timely and concise

Letters that are short and timely are much more likely to get printed. Keep letters to under 200 words and “peg” them to a recent news story or event.

2. Personalize your letter

Letters that speak from the heart are more effective than ones that simply list facts. Make sure the audience understands **why you** feel the way you do about an issue, and don’t be afraid to use the first person.

Examples:

1. I support the Mercury Products Ban in the Wisconsin legislature because I am an avid fisherman who wants to keep Wisconsin’s lakes, rivers and streams clean and my family safe.
2. As a Wisconsinite who takes pride in our progressive tradition I feel that we should lead the effort to address climate change and prevent its most dangerous consequences. That’s why I’m for wind energy and Senate Bill 185.

3. Don’t be afraid to use humor, wit, or creativity

Anyone can appreciate a bit of humor or a dash of creativity, just be careful not to cross the line and sound sarcastic, snarky or aloof.

4. Send your letter using your personal email account

Using a personal email account and your home address (as long as you’re from Wisconsin) will increase the likelihood of getting a letter printed.

5. Be persistent and remember Napoleon’s quote, “Victory belongs to the most persevering.”

Not all letters get printed. Trying more than once or at more than one paper will drastically increase your chances of having a letter printed.

6. How do I know if my letter is printed

Someone at the newspaper will call you to make sure you wrote the letter and tell you it will be published. When this happens, please e-mail the Communications department at media@cleanwisconsin.org and share the great news.

Clean Wisconsin protects Wisconsin’s clean water and air and advocates for clean energy by being an effective voice in the state legislature and by holding elected officials and polluters accountable. On behalf of its 10,000 members and its coalition partners, Clean Wisconsin protects the special places that make Wisconsin such a wonderful place to live, work and play