

Writing a News Release

NH Coverts Project - UNH Cooperative Extension



1. Use letterhead if you have it. State that it is a news release. Give the source of the information (this may be your name) and how the editor may reach the source by mail or phone if he or she has questions or wants to check authenticity.
2. Date release was written to let the editor know how fresh the information is.
3. Release date: This lets the editor know when he can use the story — date and sometimes even specific hour. Often this is **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, OR FOR RELEASE UPON-RECEIPT**. But sometimes it will be **HOLD FOR RELEASE AT 10 AM, FRIDAY NOV. 21**.
4. Slug: This is a two or three word description of content of the story (e.g., State Park Opens) It serves two purposes: (a.) Tells the editor at a glance what the story is about and (b.) Helps identify that particular story to the many hands through which it passes before it appears in the print media or on radio or TV. It is especially important when there is more than one page to the story. It is repeated at the top of each page and helps keep the pages together.
5. DATELINE: The first paragraph starts with this.
6. END MARK: If you can get all your story on one page, put some sort of sign below the last line. Some papers use -30- or ##.
7. MORE: If your story will run to two or more pages, the word MORE should be at the bottom of all but the last page, telling the editor that he or she should look for other pages. While there is no page numbering on Page 1, ensuing pages should have the SLUG repeated at top-left of page with indication of page number. Then don't forget to put the END MARK at the end of your story.
8. All stories must be typed, double-spaced, with wide margins, so editors have room on which to make comments, corrections, additions. Whenever possible, avoid long sentences.
9. Keep paragraphs down to about 4 typewritten lines each. When squeezed into a 2 inch wide newspaper column, this makes about an inch of type — easier reading.
10. Style: Write in the Inverted Pyramid Styles — that is, most important facts first and facts following in the order of diminishing importance. It saves editors time if the story can be whacked off from the bottom without fear of removing the heart of it. There are times, however, when you have a good feature story that must be written in chronological or spiraling to climax style.

WHO? WHAT? WHERE? WHEN?
WHY? HOW?

IMPORTANT
DETAILS

MISCELLANEOUS
INFORMATION