

The Bank's Time & Temperature Messages

Most large banks designate a special telephone number for recorded time and temperature messages. They sound something like: "Downtown Washington Little Bank time is 5:10 a.m., temperature is 49 degrees at 4th and Main Streets."

Probably half the banks with this service have up to three rollover messages. Meaning, the first person to call gets message number one, the second message number two, and so on. The fourth caller hears message number one, again. Are you ready to give this ultra easy project a try? Okay, here goes.

Step One. Create some short water safety messages. Remember, they must be quick and to the point. Keep the same lead-in phrase, then change the message: "The Corps of Engineers says..."

- 1) ... wear your life jackets at all times on the lake.
- 2) ... when you are on the water, swim with a friend.
- 3) ... learn to swim well today, we want you here tomorrow.
- 4) ... be safe on the lake, don't boat recklessly.
- 5)... mixing boating and booze can be lethal.
- 6) ... before leaving the dock, hook up the kill switch.
- 7) ... observe the "No Wake" zones around the lake.
- 8) ... kids are not drown proof, please keep an eye on them.
- 9) ... enjoy the lake, but don't overload the boat
- 10) ... watch for skiers on the lake, they are people, too.

Your bank message could sound like this, "The Corps of Engineers says kids are not

drown proof, please keep an eye on them. Downtown Washington Little Bank time is 5:15 a.m., temperature is 50 degrees at 4th and Main Streets."

Step Two. Pick up the telephone and start calling large banks, first, then smaller banks. When the receptionist's answers, simply ask, "Do you have a time and temperature telephone number?" If they say yes, then ask for it and get the person's name that changes the messages. Most importantly, try to get this "airing" the week prior and a few days after the three "killing weekends." That could be your first request. Then use this technique to advertise special events.

If the bank receptionists say "no," come back with, "Do you know anyone who has the time and temperature telephone number?" Some larger department stores, telephone companies and factories also have them. A few provide this service while you are holding for a short telephone call instead of playing music.

Once you make contact with the approving time and temperature person, call and make an appointment. At the first meeting provide your suggested messages. If they require shorter ones, start cutting. The person will ask when you want the messages to run. Here is where you tell him or her one week before and a few days after Memorial, Independence, and Labor Day weekends, or whenever you want them.

Do not offer the bank money; this is a community service. It is possible you might want to take a photo of the person adding your message to the recorder, or listening on the telephone to the message. Again, these photographs or slides might help with other projects.

Thank the person, and jot down the ice-breaking clues around the office when you get back to your vehicle. Call the telephone number the morning it is scheduled to run. Tape it if possible so others might benefit from your success. Telephone the bank

person and thank them. A small thank you card might be in order, also. After a few times you could obtain a letter of appreciation from the resource manager or the District.

However, if the message is not running by noon the first day, telephone your contact and ask, "When did you say the water safety messages would start?" It's simply a reminder call. More than likely your answer will be, "Oh yes, I need to change them today. Sorry."

At the close of business, call the time and temperature line again. If it's not on, wait until about 9 a.m. the next morning and call it once more. Okay, it's not on this time. How's this for the "morning after" call: "Gladys (or whatever her name is), I'm planning to tape record your time and temperature message so my Corps folks will be able to listen to it, when did you say it will start airing."

You never know, they could be having mechanical problems, etc. Be patient. Remember, it's free.

What's the temperature? Call and get the exact "Corps" degrees... good luck.