

US EPA Image Guidance

November 26, 2012

Images for resource directories and microsites are critical to web visitors' experiences on epa.gov. Testing has shown that our visitors consciously and subconsciously use images to help locate content that accomplishes their top tasks. Several standards and other requirements apply to images.

Therefore, the Office of Web Communications (OWC) will review and has final approval of images used on:

- microsite home page banners , and
- resource directory hub pages (main body content)

This review and approval applies whether a microsite or resource directory is being developed or has already been published.

Goals of OneEPA Web

- Replace EPA-centric approach with visitor-centric approach. Help visitors accomplish what they want.
- Identify top audiences and their top tasks
- Develop content for those audiences and tasks
- Measurably improve user satisfaction
- Demonstrate "One EPA"

Options for Creating Images

OWC develops the images. To help you as the editor-in-chief, OWC can develop these images for you, selecting them (OWC has access to stock images and EPA-created images) and editing them to match your site's needs. If you decide to have OWC develop images for a home/hub page, you may also suggest image ideas or submit particular images for OWC to consider.

You develop the images. Aside from a few priority topics where OWC might require that it develop images, you may develop your own images. You are then responsible for meeting the standards discussed below. OWC has final approval of image selection.

Image Standards

As an EIC, you are responsible for:

- following all EPA web standards related to images/graphics: <http://1.usa.gov/SVylbl>
- adhering to these EPA policies:
 - Children's Privacy and Children's Copyright policy: <http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/ciopolicy/2182.p.pdf> .
 - Posting Copyrighted Works on EPA Web Site: <http://intranet.epa.gov/oei/imitpolicy/qic/ciopolicy/2181.p.pdf> . (You can learn more about copyrights at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/OEI/webguide.nsf/content/copyright>.)
- Using only photos you have permission to use:
 - Photos you or OWC have licensed (for example, through stock photo websites).
 - Photos for which you or OWC have bought the copyright.
 - Photos for which you have obtained written permission from the copyright owner.
 - Photos that are free of copyright. Do not assume that photos on other agency websites are free of copyright.

- Photos owned by EPA. A large number of EPA photos are available at <http://intranet.epa.gov/media/> -- click on the Event Gallery, Stock Gallery and Panoramic Gallery links on the left.
- obtaining releases from photo models/subjects where applicable. Photo release boilerplate: <http://intranet.epa.gov/media/howto/photorelease.htm>
- meeting the standards set forth in the appendix to this document. The examples provided should help you understand which images meet One EPA Web standards.

Process for Selecting and Editing Images - New Sites

Is OWC is developing your images? Follow these steps:

Step 1. You, as the EIC, develop a website. Start thinking about images for your site only after:

- you have identified top audiences and tasks,
 - you have reviewed potential content and identified appropriate content; content is rewritten for the Web as needed, and
 - content organization is finalized.
- If this is a **resource directory**, you should:
 - develop images for (a) spoke (internal) pages and (b) right side of hub page
 - NOT develop images for main body of hub page– copy the file <http://epa.gov/epafiles/templates/webcms/placeholder.jpg> into your local directory and use that as a placeholder image instead.
 - If this is a **microsite**, you should:
 - develop images for (a) internal pages and (b) placement below the banner on the home page
 - NOT develop banner images – use placeholder images instead.

Step 2. Your management reviews and approves the site (they will see some placeholder images on home/hub page)

Step 3. Your Web Council member reviews and approves the site (s/he will see some placeholder images on home/hub page).

Step 4. Your Web Council member submits review checklist and list of top audiences/tasks to OWC (Kathleen MacKinnon) for content review.

Step 5. OWC content review team reviews and approves the site (site still shows some placeholder images). OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon notifies you, your Web Council member, and the OWC images team that site content has been approved.

Step 6. You work with OWC images team to develop images for resource directory hub page or microsite banners, as applicable.

Step 7. OWC images team notifies OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon, OWC content team, and Web Council member that images have been chosen and included in the site.

Step 8. OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon notifies you, your Web Council member, and OEI (Judy Dew and Susan Fagan) that your site can be published.

Step 9. You publish the site.

Step 10. Want to change a hub/home page image after the site has been published? Please contact OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon, who will put you in touch with the OWC images team to help you find a new image.

Developing all images on your own? Follow the steps below. Only steps 1, 6 and 7 differ from the steps in the process described above.

Step 1. You, as the EIC, develop website including all images.

Start thinking about images for site only after:

- You have identified top audiences and tasks
- You have reviewed potential content and identified appropriate content; content is rewritten for the Web as needed
- Content organization is finalized

Step 2. Your management reviews and approves the site.

Step 3. Your Web Council member reviews and approves the site.

Step 4. Your Web Council member submits review checklist and list of top audiences/tasks to OWC (Kathleen MacKinnon) for content review.

Step 5. OWC content review team reviews and approves the site. OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon notifies you, your Web Council member, and OWC images team that site content has been approved.

Step 6. OWC images team reviews resource directory hub page or microsite banners, as applicable. OWC images team works with you on any images that in OWC's judgment need to be replaced or modified.

Step 7. OWC images team approves hub page/banner images and notifies OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon, OWC content team, and Web Council member.

Step 8. OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon notifies you, your Web Council member, and OEI (Judy Dew and Susan Fagan) that the site can be published.

Step 9. You publish the site.

Step 10. Want to change a hub/home page image after the site has been published? Please contact OWC/Kathleen MacKinnon, who will put you in touch with the OWC images team to help you find a new image. You are free to suggest a new image, but note that OWC has final approval of image selection.

Appendix - One EPA Web Image Standards

What the OWC image team will look for when choosing or reviewing images

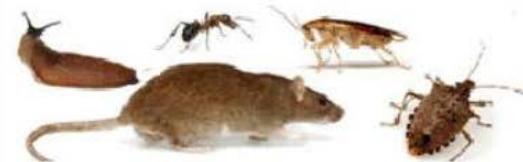
- **SIMPLICITY.** Avoid images that are overly complicated or complex. See the sample simple and complex images below.
 - One way of choosing “simple” images is to choose those that have a central focal point. Consider images with one or two subjects on a solid background or with the background slightly out of focus (for example, the image of the mom and daughter shopping). Look at the Educational Resources image. Can you spot the focal point?

SIMPLE IMAGES

Pesticides in Food and Water



Get Rid of Pests Safely

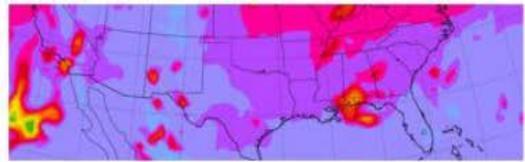


Educational Resources

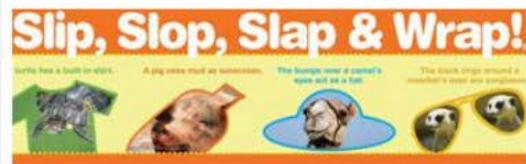


COMPLEX IMAGES

Learn About the UV Index



For Kids



About Pesticides



- **COMMUNICATION.** In the main body of a resource directory hub page, choose images that clearly communicate the text of the cluster heading and help visitors understand what content they will find.

CLEAR MEANING

Educational Resources

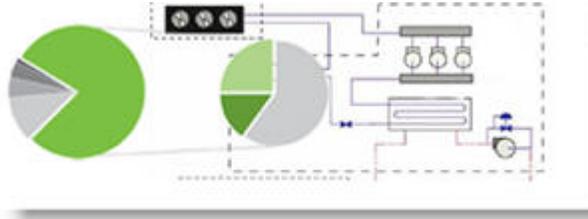


UNCLEAR

SunWise in the Community



- Imagine the information cluster if there were no heading text. Would your visitors still understand what information they are likely to find in the cluster?



What would this image mean to your visitors?

- **HIGH QUALITY.** Use images that have an appropriate resolution to ensure image clarity.

GOOD RESOLUTION



NOT AS GOOD



- **DIVERSITY.** Ensure that your images that show people show a wide range of people.
- **SENSITIVITY.**
 - Be sensitive to your subject matter. If your topic relates to adverse health effects, it's more effective to show people concerned about their health than smiling people.
 - Avoid cultural stereotypes in your selection of images.