

APWA Chapter Leader Resources and How-To Guide for National Public Works Week

Celebrating National Public Works Week-gives APWA Chapters a powerful opportunity to showcase the essential services that keep communities running and to highlight the often-silent professionals who provide them. The week also helps raise public awareness through events, exhibits, and outreach that demonstrate the real impact of public works on quality of life. This guide provides ideas on how APWA Chapters can celebrate National Public Works Week (#NPWW) at the local/regional level.

Here's what you'll find in this NPWW Chapter Guide:

- A list of sample events and activities
- A planning calendar for March through June
- Sample social media posts and NPWW Spirit Week ideas

Share and Promote Your Chapter Activities

Share with APWA headquarters what your chapter is planning by filling out this brief [three question survey](#). We'd like to help promote your chapter's activities throughout NPWW.

Sample Events and Activities

Public Works “Behind the Scenes” Video Series

Film short, vertically-shot “behind the scenes” videos that show your community members what public works really does to keep the community running. Post one 15–30 second video each day on Instagram/Facebook Reels, TikTok, and/or YouTube Shorts, featuring topics like:

- Where drinking water comes from
- What happens when you call 311
- How potholes get fixed
- Why storm drains matter
- How you drive a snowplow/sweeper

Keep it simple, people-focused, and authentic—remember that public works professionals on camera make the biggest impact. End each video with a consistent theme line. Feel free to use each year's NPWW theme as to closing line, such as “Rooted in Service, Powered by Community.”



Public works professionals with the City of Omaha, Nebraska pose with their 2025 NPWW proclamation.

Proclamation

Requesting a proclamation from elected officials including your Governor, Council, Commission, or Mayor is a great way to honor National Public Works Week and garner attention from your local media and community members about your chapter's activities taking place throughout the week. Contact their office at least one month in advance of National Public Works Week. Write a brief cover letter and enclose a draft of the proclamation. In the letter, request a time to photograph

the official presenting the proclamation to members of your chapter during a scheduled public works event or meeting. Sample proclamation text is available on the APWA National Public Works Week [Proclamations page](#).

Public Works Exhibit

Create an exhibit to spotlight public works in action. Arrange to display your exhibit at libraries, community centers, city halls, or shopping malls. You may be able to take advantage of a captive audience by exhibiting at a scheduled community event. Feature public works equipment, display photos of facilities, and provide information on upcoming public works projects. Display this year's NPWW poster or show a film or video of public works in action. When practical, have a chapter member at the exhibit to answer questions and provide information. Other ideas include:

- Billboards displayed in high traffic areas (see an example done by the North Carolina Chapter and New England Chapter below)



NPWW billboards displayed by in North Carolina.



NPWW billboards displayed on Interstate 95, Peabody, Massachusetts.



NPWW billboards displayed in Manchester, New Hampshire.

- Light pole banners
- Banner on public works facilities
- Wraps on public transportation (buses, streetcars, light rail trains, etc.)
- Sidewalk graphics
- Signs or banners at sporting events

Touch a Truck, Fill a Truck, and Open House events

Hosting an event that brings the community together is a great way for your chapter to celebrate National Public Works Week. Popular options include touch a truck events that give members of your community a firsthand look at the equipment you use in daily operations. Recycling vans, refuse trucks, pavement recyclers, road graders, and lift trucks hold fascinating possibilities for kids and adults. Fill a truck events offer you a way to involve your team and your community in fundraising efforts that can help fulfill a need in your area. You could collect food or household goods or anything else that might be needed in your community.

NATIONAL PUBLIC WORKS WEEK MAY 20 - 26, 2018

National Public Works Week is an opportunity to come together as a community to raise awareness of the Public Works Department's operations, highlight ways residents can help out their local community, and collect food and household provisions for local community food banks.

Each year, the Town of South Windsor participates in this event by coordinating the following:

- Organizing a week long food drive with multiple drop off stations
- Hosting K-2 students from one of the elementary schools at 2 of our buildings for a field trip
- Talking with residents (of all ages!) about how they can help out in their community



HOW YOU CAN PARTICIPATE

- 1 Start collecting non-perishable goods
- 2 Drop off items in a collection box in the lobby of the Town buildings any day between May 21 - 25, 2018
- 3 Stop by Giessler's (965 Sullivan Ave.) on May 26, 2018 from 10am - 2pm to meet our crew and donate goods
- 4 Follow our "Town of South Windsor Public Works" Facebook page for more information on additional drop-off locations/dates



Hosting a fill a truck event is a great way to support your community during NPWW.

Roadeo/Equipment Show

Display and demonstrate how public works equipment is used in day-to-day operations. Give public works employees the opportunity to show the skill required to operate public works equipment. Here's a list of steps to help you get started:

- Select a location with high visibility, such as a parking lot, city park, or public gathering place. Allow adequate time to research and reserve a location.
- Fill out the [Chapter/Branch Roadeo Information Form](#) at least 30 days prior to your event and send it to chapterservices@apwa.org.
- Invite elected officials or local media to participate in an activity during the event.
- Capture the event via photos and videos that can be shared throughout National Public Works Week

If you have APWA branches in your region, sponsor a contest and challenge them to a test of skills necessary to operate a backhoe, garbage pickup, forklift, and lawn tractor. Emphasize safety; highlight your equipment and vehicles' cost-effective measures and unique features. Have representatives from your chapter show equipment and answer questions.



Hosting a roadeo is a great event to include in your chapter's NPWW plans.

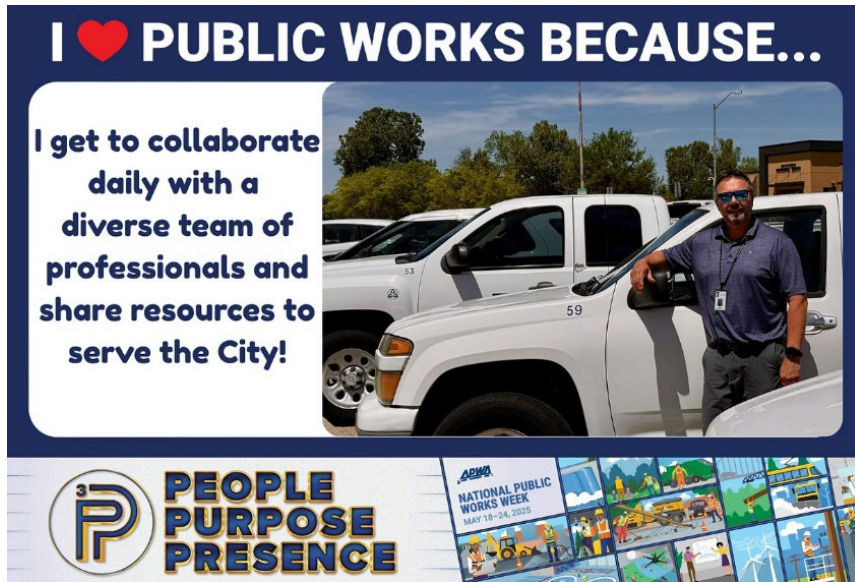
Chapter Member Appreciation Day

A Chapter Member Appreciation Day not only recognizes excellence, but it also strengthens chapter camaraderie, elevates the visibility of public works, and reminds professionals that their time given to participating in the chapter is deeply valued by their colleagues. As part of your day, your chapter could host a luncheon, barbecue, or evening happy hour. The options are endless on how you can get your chapter members together to honor and celebrate one another.

I ❤️ Public Works because” Campaign

Ask your chapter members to fill out their answer to: “I ❤️ Public Works because” and then take a picture of them holding the sign. If you are a chapter leader, don't forget to fill one out yourself! Next, post the photos on your chapter website or on social media with the #NPWW hashtag. You can do this one at a time or as a rotating GIF. Start by downloading ready-to-use artwork [here](#).

You can also implement this campaign with the public! Bring printed signs and markers with you to your NPWW event and ask community members to fill out a sign. Take individual or group pictures of people holding the signs and post on social media.



Use I heart PW artwork to engage your chapter members in your NPWW social media campaigns.

Sporting Event

Promote well-rounded living by sponsoring a sporting event. Plan the route of a race to end at a facility or project you believe deserves attention. Sponsor a golf tournament and arrange for the proceeds to be dedicated to a public works project, such as purchasing playground equipment in a community park. Sponsor a night at an organized or professional sporting event for your chapter. Arrange for a message about public works to be announced during the game.

Planning Calendar and Committees

The sooner you begin planning National Public Works Week (May 17–23, 2026) events and activities, the more successful you will be. Using committees is a good way to divide up the work.

Suggested Committee Structure

Planning Committee: Oversees and manages all activities and events.

Event Committees: One committee per event organizes and completes all tasks associated with the event.

Education Committee: Organizes all activities associated with the educational objectives of the celebration.

Promotions Committee: Organizes all activities associated with the promotional objectives of the celebration.

Social Media Committee: Plans and organizes all social media posts.

Sample Planning Calendar

April

- Schedule a kickoff meeting to organize your celebration. Invite individuals from your chapter, the chamber of commerce, the public affairs office, community schools, and area businesses (vendor partners).
- Select a Planning Committee and chairperson.
- Discuss goals, set objectives, and define target audiences.
- Determine the events and activities that will allow you to meet your objectives.
- Select the Education Committee, Promotions Committee, Social Media Committee, and a committee for each event. Select a chairperson for each committee, clarify, and assign responsibilities.
- Discuss how to capture information during your events. This will provide content for you to share online and with stakeholders and enable you to evaluate your success.
- Determine an operating budget and share information with committees. Discuss if there are any opportunities to involve sponsors.
- Develop a master calendar with deadlines and milestones, along with a schedule of meetings to review progress with committee chairpersons.
- Order your National Public Works Week posters by April 15.

May

- Committees meet to organize and plan.
- Begin your promotional efforts. If you intend to invite elected officials or local media to attend your NPWW events, begin drafting those invitations and set a date for them to go out.
- Start teasing your events on social media in early May.
- Ramp up your communications efforts on your social media channels and any other places where you can speak to the community at large.
- Celebrate National Public Works Week!
- Record the information necessary to evaluate your success and plan a meeting to bring your committee members together for a post-event download and to discuss what could be done differently next year.

June

- Celebrate your success with committee members.

- Send thank-you notes to supporters, committee members, corporate sponsors, and volunteers.
- Collect information from each chairperson about the success of their activity or event.

#NPWW Spirit Week

Each day of National Public Works Week, APWA will be hosting a Spirit Day on social media. Below, you'll find information for Monday through Friday as well as sample posts you can use on social media to get involved. Remember, feel free to adjust these as you need to fit your chapter's voice.

The examples that follow, are based on this year's NPWW dates and theme. As dates and themes change, these will need to change accordingly.

Monday (Rooted in Service, Powered by Community)

How is your chapter celebrating National Public Works Week? Post a picture that shows the ways your chapter members are motivated by their dedication to the communities they serve and are always present when work needs to be done to keep your community safe, clean, and vibrant. Monday is great for group or action photos taken during chapter events. Why do you do what you do? What gets you out of bed in the morning? What would people be surprised to know is in the public works wheelhouse? You're the stars this week!

It's a great time for posting short showcasing chapter members and how they got started in public works or with the chapter. Don't forget to let the public know about any events your chapter has going on this week.

Sample posts:

- "National Public Works Week is May 17–23! This week we're demonstrating how public works is always #RootedinService and #PoweredbyCommunity. #NPWW"
- "The roots of our service run deep. Join us on [INSERT DATE AND TIME] for our [INSERT EVENT DETAILS]. We can't wait to celebrate National Public Works Week with you! #NPWW"

Tuesday (I ❤️ Public Works Because...)

Tuesday's the time to let your chapter members shine! This is a great day to highlight why they love public works. Have people fill out the I ❤️ Public Works sign. Post a collection of signs or ask your chapter members to post their sign on their own feed. If you're doing a community event, make sure to ask members of the public to fill out the I ❤️ Public Works sign and snap photos with them holding it! A ready-to-use sign is available to download [here](#).

Sample post:

- "We're highlighting how our chapter members are #RootedinService! #WeHeartPublicWorks."

- “We’re highlighting messages from the people we serve. Thank you to all who came out for today’s [INSERT EVENT NAME] and for sharing your love of public works!
“WeHeartPublicWorks.”

Wednesday (Whatcha Wearing?)

Wednesday is all about what you wear when you do your job. Show off your waders, safety vest, or hard hat. It’s a great time to highlight the different uniforms in your department or your agency’s logo on branded items. (Don’t forget to include your office staff!). What’s the story behind them? Tell us about it!

Sample posts:

- “We don’t wear a suit and tie every day, but our drip is just as slick! #NPWW”
- “Do you know the meaning behind the color of our vests? #NPWW”
- “From waders to hard hats to office swag, every piece of gear tells the story of how we keep our communities safe, strong, and moving. Today we’re showing off the uniforms that help us get the job done—rain or shine! #NPWW #RootedInService #PoweredByCommunity”

Thursday (Throwback Thursday)

Where’s your “memory lane?”

Thursday’s Spirit Day is a classic—Throwback Thursday! Your chapter probably has a long history, so scour the archives and find something neat to share. Remember to use #NPWW and #TBT for today. A few suggestions to get you started:

- An older chapter logo. When did your chapter first form?
- How much has your chapter grown over the years? This is a great time to show off a staff picture from years past.
- How many events has your chapter hosted? Throwback to chapter members participating in previous luncheons, fundraisers, rodeos, etc.

Sample posts:

- “Our chapter got its start in [insert year], and, boy, have we grown by leaps and bounds! Check out a group photo taken in [insert year] and see how much we’ve grown. #NPWW #TBT
- “Our chapter members really showed how they were #PoweredbyCommunity in the way they responded to [insert emergency event details]. #RootedinService #FirstResponders #NPWW”

Friday (Future Friday)

Let’s celebrate the future by highlighting upcoming events, fundraisers, or initiatives your chapter will be working on in the next twelve months.

- Is there a new training program or event on the horizon?
- Are members of your chapter working on a high value project in their local community? This is your chance to highlight the excellent work being done by your chapter members.

Examples might be internet infrastructure, new interstate developments, or a new park installation within the city. It can be anything!

Another idea is to celebrate your chapter's impact on the next generation. You might consider visiting a local school, youth group, or community center and hosting a short demo or Q&A about what public works does. Invite kids or teens to draw, write, or share what they think the "future of their community" looks like. Capture photos or short video clips of the interaction (with appropriate permissions) and share your favorites on social media.

Use hashtags like #NPWW, #FutureFriday, and #PoweredByCommunity.

Sample posts for Future Friday:

- This year's #NPWW may be coming to an end, but public works never sleeps! We're looking forward to hosting [example event] soon. #NPWW #FutureFriday"
- "Today we spent time with some bright young minds at [INSERT HOST FACILITY NAME], sharing what public works is all about—from the roads they ride on to the parks where they play. Swipe through to see a few of our favorite moments from today's visit. We're proud to be #RootedInService and excited to help shape the future right alongside them. #NPWW #PoweredByCommunity"

Beyond National Public Works Week

Remember that public visibility efforts don't need to be limited to National Public Works Week. Consider using any of the ideas in this document to create a year-long plan to promote the work your team does in your local community. Sharing what public works is and how it advances quality of life is a worthwhile goal to have every day. Don't forget to include your public works colleagues in your messaging because sometimes they forget how valuable they are and how much their work matters.