



MISSOURI ASSOCIATION of
MANUFACTURERS

A Guide to

Hosting Successful Plant Tours



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**A GUIDE TO HOSTING SUCCESSFUL
CONGRESSIONAL PLANT TOURS**

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Importance of Hosting Congressional Plant Tours

The value of hosting a plant tour for your local member of Congress cannot be overstated. MAM's work in Washington is complimented by your work outside the Capital Beltway. Hosting plant tours on your home turf is a vital step in building long lasting and personal relationships with your legislators and the key members of their staff.

Visiting regularly with your legislators both in-state and on Capitol Hill is critical, but it is just as important to invite them to personally visit your company's plant facilities. Tours will enable you to reinforce and personalize your message by having members of Congress interact with your employees while showing them what your company is all about. You make a powerful argument for your concerns when your legislators and their key staffers tour your plant facilities, learn about your products, and see how you boost their constituency with economic activity and jobs. A tour and time to meet with select workers provides legislators with a better sense of how potential legislation could impact your company and its employees.

Communicating and touring with staffers can be just as valuable and important as a relationship with your legislator. In many instances, staff members are the issues experts and they hold the trust and attention of the legislator on a daily basis. Including district office and Capitol Hill staffers on factory tours will make for an even better return on your investment of time and energy.

A tour and regular follow-ups can make for a mutually beneficial relationship between you and your member of Congress. Members of Congress are always thinking about the next election and where to cut and spend, so use a tour to get your legislator thinking about your company and your workers, who will be voting on Election Day.

Following are step-by-step instructions to help you successfully plan a tour of your facilities. Please contact MAM if you have any questions at 417-893-1656 or e-mail info@MAMStrong.org

10 STEPS TO A SUCCESSFUL PLANT TOUR

1. **Fax a letter of invitation to your member of Congress.** A sample invitation letter is below. Be sure to copy us at MAM (info@MAMStrong.org) so that we are aware of your request. Members of Congress receive many invitations to events so make sure to submit your request as soon as possible. You can find fax and phone numbers for your Members of Congress at <http://www.house.mo.gov/MemberRoster.aspx>
2. **Follow up.** After a day or two, call the elected official's office and ask to speak to the scheduler. It may take several calls before you get a response from the scheduler, but don't be discouraged! If your elected representatives cannot attend, invite his or her chief of staff and/or district director.
3. **Set the date.** Once the scheduler has confirmed the time and date, notify MAM (info@MAMStrong.org) of the date and any additional information you may need.
4. **Coordinate the logistics.** Prepare a schedule including the legislators' arrival and departure times, time for a plant tour, and if possible, time for the elected official to speak with employees. Arrange for a photographer to take photos of the elected official during the tour!
5. **Inform your employees.** Let your employees know their elected representative will be visiting. You may want to invite key employees to help lead the tour. Choose your tour guide carefully – make sure the tour guide knows the names of all the employees and is informed about all aspects of operations to be able to answer questions.
6. **Prepare a press release (optional).** This is a great opportunity to show off your company! Ask the scheduler if it's okay for you to submit a press release to your local paper. They may have specific local contacts they would like it to be sent to as well. *A sample press release is enclosed.* (If you do not want press to attend, send out the release immediately after the event has been held.)
7. **Day Before: Review logistics** with your employees, and confirm plans with the elected officials' scheduler. Review the priority issue talking points. Take a moment to review your elected official's biography. Think about the issue most affecting your business and how you can best explain it. Gather data about your company to share with the elected official (e.g., number of employees, revenues/impact on local economy, unique or innovative onsite programs for employees, new manufacturing techniques, etc.).
8. **Day Of: Speak up!** Tell your elected representative how your business is doing and what the greatest challenges are. They value your company's specific experiences.
9. **Day After: Follow up.** Send thank you letters (*a sample is enclosed*) to the elected official and others who participated. Also, please complete and return the enclosed *Plant Tour Feedback Form* to let MAM know how it went and if there are any issues we should follow up on. If you took any photos during the tour, then please email them to MAM! We would love to feature your photos on the MAM website and social media!
10. **Keep in touch!** This is just the beginning of what can be a valuable relationship with your member of Congress. Communicate with him or her several times throughout the year.

Sample Invitation

*Note: Many Congressional offices prefer to receive invitations by e-mail. Please call their office first (Capitol switchboard 202-224-3121) or visit the <http://www.house.mo.gov/MemberRoster.aspx> to look up contact information for the elected official you are trying reach.

[DATE]

The Honorable [NAME]
US House of Representatives/U.S. Senate
[ADDRESS]
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative/Senator [LAST NAME]:

I am writing to invite you to tour [COMPANY] located in [CITY] during the upcoming August recess. As members of the window, door, and skylight industry, we produce products which enable home and business owners to conserve energy and save money while maintaining manufacturing jobs here in [STATE]. [COMPANY] would be honored if you would join us for a plant tour and discussion of the issues affecting our industry here in [STATE].

We would like to invite you to join us from [TIME, e.g. 8:00-9:30 am on DATE]; but we are flexible if there is another time that would work better for your schedule. We would give you a tour of our facility and provide time for you to meet some of our employees. I will follow up this request with your office or you may reach me at [PHONE/EMAIL].

Thank you for your attention and we hope to see you here soon.

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]
[TITLE]
[COMPANY]

CC: info@MAMStrong.org

Sample Press Release

For Release: [Date]

Contact: [Your Name, Title, Phone Number]

[CompanyName] Welcomes Senator/Representative [Name], Urges Support of Local Manufacturing Jobs

[City, St.] Today, [CompanyName] welcomed our local Congressional representative, [Title Name] for a tour of our facility and a discussion of the issues affecting our company and our community's workers.

[CompanyName] is committed to civic involvement. Too often, politicians in Washington make decisions affecting employees and employers in our community without a real understanding of the impact those decisions will have here at home.

[CompanyName] expressed to Representative [Name] the importance of a balanced national energy policy that includes promotion of energy efficiency through consumer tax credits and reducing regulatory burdens that hinder job growth in our community.

[CompanyName] is committed to making a difference for our community through our involvement in the democratic process, and we appreciate Representative [Name] taking the time to hear our concerns about the challenges our industry has faced during the housing downturn and financial crisis.

[Insert Description of Company Here]

Sample Thank You Letter

DATE

The Honorable **[NAME]**
US House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515/20510

Dear Representative **[NAME]**:

Thank you **[and/or staff name]** for visiting our plant on **[date]**. We were honored that you took the time to visit with us, and hope it was as enjoyable for you as it was for all of us here.

As we discussed, the window, door, and skylight industry has been hard-hit by the housing crisis. We encourage your support for energy-efficiency incentives and other measures to spur consumer purchases that will enable us to continue manufacturing here in **[City, State]**. **[Add brief comment about impact of issue(s) to your company.]** We appreciate your support, and will stay in touch as relevant legislation progresses in Congress.

We hope to see you again soon.

Sincerely,

NAME
COMPANY

CC: info@MAMStrong.org

Plant Tour/Meeting Feedback Form

Thank you for taking the time to get involved and meet with your elected official! MAM appreciates your efforts. Please complete and return this form to let us know how it went. If any follow up is needed, we would be happy to work with your Congressional Representative to ensure your efforts are recognized. Thank you!

Name: _____

Company: _____

Date of event: _____

Location: _____

Elected officials attending: _____

Staff attending: _____

Issues Discussed: _____

Were there any questions asked that WDMA should follow up on?

Other comments:

PLEASE email at Info@MAMStrong.org and include photos if you would like to be featured on MAM's website & Social Media

Thank you for taking the time to get involved!

