Use the news story tool to draft your news stories for NREL.gov.

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| Headline  **8 words max**  Primary angle (what’s happening) |
| Start writing here … |
| Deck  **14 words max**  Secondary angle (what’s the impact or benefit) |
| Start writing here … |
| Intro |
| Lead/Hook  **25 words max**  Draw readers in with a “shiny object.”  Try to make the lead one or more of the following:   * Concrete (brings ideas to life with content readers can absorb with one or more of the five senses—or a startling statistic) * Creative (borrows tools from fiction: human interest, anecdote, characters, action, metaphor, and word play) * Provocative (provokes a question in readers’ minds that they can only answer by reading this piece). |
| Start writing here … |
| Nut Graph  **25 words max**  Tell the story in a nutshell, make a promise, or communicate a key message. |
| Start writing here … |
| Background  **42–65 words**  Provide context (e.g., a definition, methods, statistics, and history/trends); make it as short as possible. |
| Start writing here … |
| Image/Caption/Catchline  **14 words max**  Caption should communicate a key message/takeaway rather than describing what’s in the photo or graphic. *See Image and Video Guidance section below.* |
| **Body**  The middle of the story. Support and build on the foundation of the nut graph. Include three subsections with subheads that use strong, active verbs and incorporate key messages. |
| Part I  **42–65 words**  Include subhead/H2. |
| Start writing here … |
| Part II  **42–65 words**  Include subhead/H2. |
| Start writing here … |
| Part III  **42–65 words**  Include subhead/H2. |
| Start writing here … |
| **Callout**  Use quotes. Lift the most provocative line from the copy. |
| Start writing here … |
| **Conclusion** |
| Wrap-Up  **42–65 words**  Closely aligned to the nut graph; revisit key message. |
| Start writing here … |
| Kicker  **42–65 words**  Concrete, creative, and provocative. Tie back to the shiny object so readers remember and act. Leave a lasting impression. |
| Start writing here … |
| Footer  Include a call to action to keep readers on nrel.gov. What do we want our readers to do next? Learn more about this research area, download the full publication, view all NREL publications, etc.  **Example:**  View an infographic about Eagle to see how it stacks up to Peregrine, watch a time-lapse video of Eagle “settling into its nest,” and learn more about NREL’s computational science capabilities and facilities on nrel.gov. |
| Start writing here … |

**Content Tips**

**Lengths**

Aim for:

* 14 words per sentence (20 max)
* 25 words max in the first and second paragraphs
* 42 words per subsequent paragraph (65 max)
* 2 syllables per word, on average
* 5 characters or less per word, on average (*Wall Street Journal* and *New York Times* do it every day).

**Content Highlights**

* Main idea: Incorporate into headline, deck.
* Major points: Cover in subheads.
* Minor points: Incorporate into lists, links, catch lines/captions, callouts, bold-faced lead-ins for bullets, and highlighted key words.

**Resources**

* wordcount.org
* [Use Readability Statistics in Word](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/test-your-document-s-readability-85b4969e-e80a-4777-8dd3-f7fc3c8b3fd2#__toc342546555) and aim for:
* 0% passive sentences
* 60–70 Flesch reading ease
* Ninth-grade Flesch-Kincaid reading level.

**Skim Test**

* Make it scannable! Lift ideas off the page.
* Can I learn everything without reading a single paragraph?
* Break the text into chunks no wider or longer than a dollar bill.

**Submitting Your Story**

When your story is complete, add it to the CMS for review and approvals.

**Image and Video Guidance**

Once your news story is created in the CMS, send the URL to a developer with the following information to add an image or video. At least one image is recommended for use in your story, a thumbnail on the [main news listing page,](https://www.nrel.gov/news/news.html) and in story promotion.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Images** | | | |
| **File Name** Also attach file to email |  | [**Image Gallery**](https://images.nrel.gov/bp/#/) **#** |  |
| [**Alt Text**](https://energy.gov/eere/communicationstandards/alt-text-requirements-web-images) |  | | |
| **Caption** |  | | |
| [**Credit**](https://communications_resources.nrel.gov/style_guide/photo_image_and_video_credits) |  | | |
| **Video** | | | |
| **Video URL** |  | | |
| [**TextVersion**](https://www.nrel.gov/web-standards/text-versions.html)  Required; attach to email |  | | |
| **Caption** |  | | |

**Additional Info for Staff Only**

You don’t need to submit a duplicate version of your program news story to publish on theSOURCE—NREL.gov content can be leveraged directly in the Highlights section of the NREL Headlines home page.

However, if there is additional information related to your story that applies only to NRELians, a separate, staff-focused posting may be warranted. Use the field below to draft a new Intro section for your story containing the internal-only information, followed by a footer that includes “Read the full story on NREL.gov” (or similar) as the call to action.

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| --- |
| Start writing here … |