

MASON
DEERFIELD
CHAMBER



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you're
INVITED

MASON DEERFIELD CHAMBER'S
RIBBON CUTTING INFORMATION



SETTING A DATE

In order to provide the maximum amount of exposure and attendance, the Mason Deerfield Chamber exclusively offers ribbon cuttings Monday-Thursday between the hours of 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m. or 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. Be aware of major holidays and avoid planning your event for those days. Try to avoid a conflict with major community and/or sports events.

TIME OF DAY

The time of day you choose to hold your event is also critical to its success. It's an important step in the planning process and helps determine the type of special event that you'll conduct. Morning functions, for example, will have an entirely different atmosphere and style than an evening cocktail reception. Luncheon gatherings will naturally require more food and beverages. Consider the following when making your decision:

- Very few successful special events are held early in the morning. Unless it is a necessity, morning events should begin no earlier than 8:00 a.m.
- Luncheon events often turn out well, since most everyone eats a mid-day meal. However, luncheons require more advance notice in sending out invitations. Many people schedule luncheon arrangements weeks ahead and they will need to be notified as early as possible to get your event on their calendars. If you decided on a luncheon event, the best time is 11:45 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Late afternoon and early evening functions seem to be the most popular and successful. This allows people to drop by after work. The best time for an evening event is 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
- Try to avoid mid-morning and mid-afternoon time periods.
- Half-day open house or tours of your company are not advisable unless it's necessary or traditional in your line of business (i.e. hotels or restaurants). If you decide on a half-day event, be certain to have a designated time for a ribbon cutting or other special ceremonies to lend focus to your event.
- If media coverage is important to you, give serious consideration to their deadlines before selecting a time for your event.

WHO'S WHO – INVITATION LIST

When developing the list of who you will invite, consider the following groups of people:

- Potential and current customers
- Suppliers
- Employees and their partners
- Representatives from the chamber
- Key government officials – city council members, mayors and public officials from the district where your business is located. If your goal is to have a public official present, you may want to schedule that person first and build your event around his/her availability.
- Media outlets
- Neighboring businesses
- Friends and family
- Business associates

To help identify public officials, please contact the Chamber office.



INVITATIONS

Once you have identified your guest list, here are some tips to remember when sending out invitations:

- Prepare a basic invitation that is simple and to the point — include who, what, when, where and why.
- If desired, include an RSVP. This will give you an idea of how much food/beverages to have on hand.
- A week to 10 days is sufficient for most event RSVPs, although two weeks would be preferable.
- Be sure to include a good map or very clear instructions on how to get to your event.
- Identify parking areas for your guests.
- Indicate in your invitation whether the event is casual, semi-formal/business attire or formal.
- If spouses or other guests are also invited, indicate that as well.

FOOD & BEVERAGES

Hors d'oeuvres and beverages are typically served, but it is your decision. Here are some helpful ideas when it comes to planning a menu:

- For morning events, coffee, juices, fruit and pastries are common. A full breakfast is not necessary.
- At luncheon functions, serve some kind of sandwich or light snack, cookies, and refreshments.
- During the late afternoon or early evening events, light hors d'oeuvres or finger foods such as, chips, dips, cheeses, vegetable plates or cold-cut meat trays are perfect.
- Serving alcohol is entirely your choice. (Check with your insurance agent about host liability)
- Many people choose to enlist the help of a caterer for larger events. Check with the chamber or visit the online business directory at madechamber.org for a list of our catering members.
- If you do decide to provide your own refreshments, be sure to have an ample amount of food and beverages for your guests, as well as sufficient plates, cups, napkins, trash cans, and other supply items.

PLANNING A PROGRAM/CEREMONY

Whether you're staging a groundbreaking or a ribbon cutting for your company, it adds a nice touch to an event to incorporate a brief program. It provides not only valuable recognition for you and your key employees but also makes the event more purposeful, and allows you to explain more about your business. Consider these suggestions when planning your program or formal ceremony:

- People generally anticipate spending no more than about a half hour at a ribbon cutting or grand opening ceremony, so plan your event agenda accordingly.
- Limit the number of speakers and the length of their speeches.
- To help keep the program flowing smoothly, set a time limit for participants. Be sure to give each of your speakers a call the day before the event as a reminder.
- Indoors or out, any group of 50 or less usually does not need a microphone system. More than 50 people usually requires voice amplification. A podium or lectern is often helpful to speakers.
- Conclude your program with the appropriate ceremonial or symbolic activity to commemorate the event: a ribbon cutting for a grand opening or shoveling the first load of dirt for a groundbreaking. These activities let guests know the formal program is over and they also create good photo opportunities.
- If your event includes an open house or tour of your facilities, be sure friendly and knowledgeable employees conduct group tours. Unguided self-tours by your guests are not nearly as valuable as guided tours.
- Consider having some kind of door prize or drawing as part of your program. Winning a sample of your product, a gift card, or dinner at a nice restaurant can add to your guests' enjoyment and builds attendance.
- If holding an outdoor event, always have a backup plan in case of bad weather.
- Send thank you letters the day after your event to anyone who played a key role in staging it, particularly those who took part in the official program. If you collected names and addresses of guests who attended, consider sending out a thank you note to them as well.

MEDIA COVERAGE

Do not rely on the media to give coverage to your special event. There are many ribbon cuttings and ground breakings. They can't cover all of them. The following are some concrete things you can do to increase the chances of getting more media coverage for your event:

- Send a press release to the news directors or business editors at least 10 days ahead of your event. More time may need to be allowed for print media.
- Your press release should include the journalistic basics of who, what, when, where and why.
- Have a camera and photographer on hand so that if the media was not able to attend your event, you can send a follow-up press release (with photo) stating that your event took place.

At the Event

CHAMBER ATTENDANCE

If the event is scheduled during the allotted days and times provided in the packet, the Chamber will make every attempt to ensure adequate chamber representation is present at your event. Notify Member Engagement Manager, Lisa Thamann at lisa@madechamber.org, at least two weeks prior to your event so that chamber staff and volunteers can make plans to be in attendance. If you would like a chamber representative to speak at your event, please provide more advanced notification.

PRESENTATION SCISSORS

The chamber will provide you with a pair of oversized, 25-inch presentation scissors to use during the ribbon cutting ceremony, along with branded ribbon and a certificate of recognition.

PHOTOGRAPHY

If arrangements have been made to have a chamber representative present at your event, you may also request to have photos taken. Digital event photos can be emailed to you for your own use, upon request.

Chamber Resources

MEMBER NEWS

A news release of your event can be added to the "Member News" section of the chamber's website. Email press releases to info@madechamber.org. Allow at least three days for publication.

ELECTED OFFICIALS

If you would like to invite local and/or state elected officials to your event, please contact the chamber office for contact information for public officials.

