The Federal Communications Commission plans to establish new rules for the ways that associations can contact their members. As of Jan. 1, 2005, associations would no longer allow to fax their members, subscribers, advertisers, etc. to ask them for their participation in various association events, unless the association has written permission from the receivers of the intended faxes.

This means we can’t let you know about our new programs without your permission. And we can’t use the fax machine to ask you to renew your subscription to this magazine. We can’t let you know whether or not an EIFS education program will be taking place in your city. And, in general, we can’t tell you via fax if a meeting location has been changed at the last minute. Those reasons for contacting you via fax are just barely scratching the surface.

AWCI will abide by the law, if it passes, but we’ll also work with other associations to help change this law, if that’s what our members prefer.

Considering the many ways marketers can get to us today, we believe the fax vehicle is the least intrusive. We’re not interrupting your dinner with telephone calls, and we’re not stuffing your e-mailbox full of spam. We’re simply sending a fax, which takes only a few moments of your time, if that much. Like television programs that you deem offensive, you can turn off the TV if you don’t like it or approve; you can give our faxes a quick glance and either act upon them or toss them in the trash. It’s your call.

This new challenge is something AWCI is investigating, but in advance of the Aug. 25 deadline, we worked with our members to earn their permission to stay in touch in the least intrusive way we know—the fax machine.

You want and need us as much as we want and need you, so let’s all work together to keep the lines of communication open.