

The answer to the question *who?* must be in the lead, but that doesn't necessarily mean we need the name. Generally, it's better to use a brief description (e.g., *a union leader, two office workers, a local woman*) in the lead to set up the actual name(s) for early in line two:

Police have arrested an unemployed truck driver for yesterday's robbery at the Jones Trucking Company. Police say John Smith went in to see his former employer armed with. . . .

A man charged with robbing, raping and then murdering a local teenager went on trial today. David Jones sat silently. . . .

### *Save the Day and Date for Later*

Don't *start* the lead with the day or date unless it's the critical part of the story. Always have the date somewhere in the story, usually in the lead sentence, but remember that almost all stories we report happened *today*—that's not news.

No: This morning, dozens of police officers called in sick in what's believed to be the latest attack of the "blue flu."

Yes: Dozens of police officers called in sick this morning, in what's believed to be the latest attack of the "blue flu."

### *Update Leads*

Update leads whenever possible. Frequently, the effect of an earlier action makes a lead sound more timely and interesting.

OLDER: The city council last night voted to increase property tax rates.

UPDATED: Property tax bills will be going up.