

**Writing for the Mass Media
Chapter 7, Basic News Leads
Leads—Pages 164-168**

Section I: Condensing Lengthy Leads

1. **A local family returning home from a shopping trip Saturday night found their two-story home engulfed in fire.**

OR

Firefighters were unable to save the two-story frame house of a local family who discovered the house engulfed in flames when they returned from a shopping trip Saturday night.

OR

A 3rd Street family's home is a total loss after a Saturday night fire.

2. **A group of angry parents confronted School Superintendent Gary Hubbard Tuesday night demanding to know why they had not been informed that a middle school student who may have been targeting their children had brought a gun to school. (NOTE: It's Gary not Greg Hubbard)**

OR

Some local middle school parents are angry saying they should have been informed about a gun incident on school grounds Friday.

Section II: Using Proper Sentence Structure

1. **City Council voted 7-0 to offer free memberships to local youth centers and health clubs for low-income families with children ages 8 to 15 to curb what officials are calling an epidemic of obesity.**

OR

City Council has approved a plan to offer children free memberships in local health clubs and youth centers. The initiative is to try to curb what city officials are calling an epidemic of obesity among young people.

- 2. A local sheriff's deputy died after being struck by lightning while directing traffic during an electrical storm despite the efforts of a university student to revive him.**

OR

A sheriff's deputy directing traffic during an electrical storm Sunday died after being struck by lightning. Twenty minutes of CPR from a local college student was unable to keep the officer alive, officials said.

Section III: Emphasizing the News

- 1. More than 90 percent of all heart attack victims have one or more classic risk factors- smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure, according to the National Institutes of Health in Washington, D.C.**

OR

Smoking, diabetes, high cholesterol and high blood pressure contribute to 90 percent of heart attacks, according to a new report from the National Institutes of Health.

- 2. The 16-year-old driver of the Jeep Wrangler that rolled over in a one-vehicle accident that injured the driver and two other people had just gotten her driver's license two days before the accident, police said.**

OR

Two days after getting her driver's license, a local 16-year-old was involved in a roll-over car accident that injured her and two passengers, police said.

Section IV: Combining Multisentence Leads

- 1. School Superintendent Gary Hubbard unveiled a new program that will pay students to inform school officials if their classmates bring guns or drugs to school or violate other school rules. (NOTE: it's Gary not Greg Hubbard)**

OR

Local students who tell on their classmates will be paid for their tattling as part of new school district plan.

2. Nearly one in every 37 adult Americans had either served or were serving prison time last year, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

OR

More than 5.5 million Americans have spent time in jail, according to a new U.S. Department of Justice report.

Section V. Stressing the Unusual

1. Three elderly people were found dead in their homes over the past two days, the fans and air conditioners that were to protect them from the heat wave blanketing the city still in their boxes.

OR

Unopened fans and air conditioners have been found in the homes of three local elderly people who died during the ongoing heat wave, city health officials revealed today.

- 2. Authorities charged a city woman with assault and reckless endangerment after witnesses said she failed to help her 8-year-old son cross a set of railroad tracks moments before he was struck by a train.**

OR

A local mother faces multiple charges after allegedly taunting her son into riding his bike into the path of an oncoming train. Hit by the train along Fremont Avenue, the 8-year-old boy is in critical condition and on life support.

Section VI. Localizing Your Lead

- 1. State Rep. Constance P. Wei is proposing legislation to increase the penalties for identity theft and help credit card holders discover whether their numbers have been stolen.**

OR

Charleston's significantly higher-than-the-national-average rate of identity theft has prompted a local lawmaker to propose that a special website be established that can tell consumers if their credit card numbers have been stolen.

- 2. City schools received \$1.2 million in federal funds to operate a program to identify and support at-risk youth who are prone to dropping out of school.**

OR

The local school district's efforts to help at-risk students are receiving a \$1.2 million boost thanks to a federal grant.

Section VII. Updating Your Lead

- 1. Police today charged a 48-year-old single mother with second-degree murder in the shooting death of a man who was attempting to rob the convenience store where she worked.**

OR

Police have charged a local convenience store manager with second-degree murder and other charges a day after she shot two armed men, killing one, who were attempting to rob her, authorities said.

2. Police said today that the 27-year-old driver involved in a head-on collision on Cheney Road that killed two people was legally drunk at the time of the accident.

OR

The mother killed in a Cheney Road head-on collision yesterday that also claimed the life of her infant daughter was legally drunk at the time of the accident, police announced today.

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