

BLACKOUTSPEAKOUT

Speak out for nature and democracy.
Silence is not an option.

BLACKOUTSPEAKOUT.CA

Thank you for joining more than 100 organizations who have committed to speaking out on June 4th to protest against efforts to silence our voices.

Margaret Atwood, who just signed on to the Black Out Speak Out campaign said, *"Whatever your political affiliations, if you believe in free and open democracy, now is the time to speak out."*

So what can you do? From blacking out your website to tweeting and posting on facebook, there's a variety of ways in which you can Speak Out with us now and on June 4th.

If you are part of a group, organization or business who has committed to blacking out your website:

1. Please announce that you have joined the campaign on your Facebook page and through your Twitter account (use #blackoutspeakout in your tweet) and also on the Black Out Speak Out page (facebook.com/BlackOutSpeakOut)
2. Provide the following link blackoutspeakout.ca/instructions to your IT team, webmaster or otherwise where they will find the tools needed to darken your site on June 4:
 - **Technical instructions for blacking out your website** (also below)
 - **A splashpage download for your website**
 - **Images to download for your blog**

NOTE: On June 4, when people visit your website, a splash page will come up that explains why your website is blacked out and will ask people to take action by clicking through to blackoutspeakout.ca.

When they click through to the Black Out Speak Out site, they will find the following actions to speak out:

Send an **email** to your Member of Parliament asking them to stand up and express our concerns about making sweeping changes through a budget bill without sufficient public input and parliamentary debate.

Write a **letter** or **call** our leaders to tell them to stop budget bill C-38 which will weaken important environmental protections without sufficient engagement from all Canadians.

Speak out on twitter at #blackoutspeakout or by adding a **twibbon**

Speak out on facebook by changing your **photos** and **status**

If cannot blackout your website, but still want to participate on June 4th, here are two more ways to show your strong support:

- Set your company-wide email to auto-reply with the following message:
"I'm speaking out for nature and democracy today. Go to blackoutspeakout.ca to take action. Silence is not an option."
- Join the 100 plus groups by sending an email to your entire list and address book. We will send you a template that you can customize closer to June 4th

Thank you for your support in protecting our essential Canadian rights and helping to demonstrate that Canadians from all walks of life have come together to defend core democratic principles.

More detailed information is below including technical details and most recent press releases.

ABOUT BLACK OUT SPEAK OUT (blackoutspeakout.ca):

Launched on May 7, Black Out Speak Out (or Silence, on parle!, in French) invites organizations, businesses and citizens from across Canada to darken their websites on June 4, and speak out against changes introduced in the federal government's budget act (C-38) by darkening their websites and taking other actions on June 4.

Black Out Speak Out is a joint project of CAPE, CPAWS, David Suzuki Foundation, Ecojustice, Environmental Defence, Equiterre, Greenpeace, Nature Canada, Pembina Institute, Sierra Club Canada, West Coast Environmental Law, and WWF Canada.

For a full list of partners, visit <http://blackoutspeakout.ca/partners.php>

TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Here are some ways you can “black out” your website on June 4 to speak out for Canadian nature and democracy...

Shut down your site and post our Black out Speak Out splash page.

We have provided a special .htaccess file that will redirect all pages on your site to a Black Out Speak Out page. By dropping the three files we provide onto your server, under most circumstances your site will be automatically blacked out on June 4 2012.

You’ll just need to do a couple of small tweaks to the .htaccess file that we provide, and you’ll be all set.

This solution is the most effective way to use your website to Speak Out on June 4. We have provided a set of detailed instructions that will be applicable to most website configurations, along with the necessary files to drop onto your server.

Darken your site using an overlay.

For those who would prefer not to shut down their site entirely or who are uncomfortable working with .htaccess files on their server, we suggest you “darken” your website by placing a dark overlay over the regular site. Visitors to your site will see the Black Out Speak Out message on this overlay, but would then be able to close the overlay and proceed to use your website as normal.

We will not be providing detailed instructions on this option, as there are a variety of ways to do this depending on how your site is configured. We do, however, provide some suggestions about how you might go about it for a WordPress or a Drupal site.

Post a Black Out Speak Out image on your blog

For those using a hosted service, such as Blogger or similar sites, you will not have as much access to the look and feel of your site as others might. In these situations, we suggest posting a Black Out image as your blog post for June 4 ([available here](#)).

If your service is not a blogging platform, we suggest you build a 'landing page', a specific page that uses the Black Out image and describes the Black Out Speak Out campaign. [Click here](#) to download a large image that you can use for this. There you will also find a Photoshop file that you can use to create a customized image for your site.

Spread the Word

Whether it is a blog post or a landing page that you put up, we suggest that you take the URL for the page or the post and circulate it through the social networks you use, such as Twitter and Facebook.

Detailed instructions for blacking out your website

Using this option, your entire site will be shut down on June 4 (based on your server's clock). A default Black Out Speak Out page will be displayed on your site.

Be careful! Making mistakes with an .htaccess file can render your website inaccessible!

These instructions assume that your web site uses the Apache engine (which is usually the case).

These instructions are not meant to handle every hosting or website situation. They should be applicable to the majority of situations, though. You will require a moderate level of technical ability, such as the ability to log in to your website's FTP server.

Follow these steps to implement a full site black out:

1. Using the FTP software of your choice, log in to your site's FTP server, and go to the root folder of your web host (this is often called "public_html" or "www")
2. Look for a file called ".htaccess". **IMPORTANT:** This file is sometimes hidden, so you may need to adjust the settings on your FTP software to show hidden files. Proceeding without being sure whether or not you have an existing .htaccess file could cause problems with your site.
- 3a. If you have an existing .htaccess file, download that file and open it in your text editor. Add the following lines at the top of the file:

```
Options +FollowSymlinks
RewriteEngine on
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_URI} !\.(png|jpe?g|gif|css|js|txt)$
RewriteCond %{TIME_MON} =06
RewriteCond %{TIME_DAY} =04
RewriteCond %{TIME_YEAR} =2012
RewriteRule !^.*blackoutspeakout\.html$
http://www.yoursite.com/blackoutspeakout.html [L,R=302]
```

This file uses Apache's ability to rewrite incoming website requests to redirect them to the page of your choice. Here's a quick rundown of what the above code does...

Options +FollowSymlinks

RewriteEngine on

...the above two lines turn on the Apache Rewrite engine.

```
RewriteCond %{REQUEST_URI} !\.(png|jpe?g|gif|css|js|txt)$
```

...this line means that requests for image files (png, jpg, gif), CSS files, or txt files will not be rewritten.

```
RewriteCond %{TIME_MON} =06  
RewriteCond %{TIME_DAY} =04  
RewriteCond %{TIME_YEAR} =2012
```

...these three lines isolate the Black Out page to appear only on June 4 2012. On all other dates, the file requests will be untouched. If the clock on your server is not correct, you may see unexpected results.

```
RewriteRule !^.*blackoutspeakout\.html$  
http://www.yoursite.com/blackoutspeakout.html [L,R=302]
```

...and finally, this line rewrites all other file requests to point to blackoutspeakout.html.

IMPORTANT: You need to change the section that says “yoursite.com” to the domain that your site uses. Leave the rest of the line as is, but alter the yoursite.com section.

Upload the altered version to the root folder of your website. It’s a great idea to **make a backup** copy of your original .htaccess file before replacing it.

3b. If you found that you didn’t have an existing .htaccess file, then you can take the .htaccess file [we provide here](#), modify the file so that the domain is correct for your site (as discussed in step 3a), and upload it into the root folder of your web host.

(If you want to verify that everything is working correctly at the end of Step 3, you can alter the values that describe the date to today’s date in order to engage the blackout on your site right now, and then change those values back when you have confirmed that everything is functioning as expected.)

4. Upload the blackoutspeakout.html file and its accompanying graphic file, blackoutspeakout.jpg ([all available here](#)) to the root folder of your web host. You may wish to alter the provided HTML to include a contact link or other information specific to your organization.

5. You’re done! If everything went smoothly, your site should automatically reconfigure itself on June 4 2012 to be blacked out.

Detailed instructions on how to darken a WordPress site using an overlay...

Darkening your WordPress site can be done quickly and easily through the use of plug-ins. There are various plug-ins that provide 'splash page' functionality. The solution described below shows you how to use a plugin that will present a user with the Black Out Speak Out dark page as an overlay on your site, but will allow them to close the overlay to get to your regular website.

These instructions use the "WP Splash Image" plug in. This is not an endorsement of this plugin, but merely demonstrates how it could be used to participate in Black Out Speak Out.

Depending on the theme your site uses and the version of WordPress that you have installed, your experience may vary from the instructions listed below. Should you run into difficulties with these directions, the Black Out Speak Out campaign is unable to assist you with technical support on implementing your overlay. You may wish to try another similar 'splash page' plugin.

Initially we will set up the plugin in test mode, which means it shows up all the time on every page. After the basic configuration is complete, we will tune it so that it appears only on the Black Out Speak Out day, and is displayed at a frequency that you select.

Basic configuration...

1. Using the FTP software of your choice, log in to your site's FTP server, and go to the root folder of your web host (this is often called "public_html" or "www") and upload the graphic file blackoutspeakout.jpg ([available here](#)).
2. Log in to your WordPress site's administration area. Under the Plugins menu, click "Add new".
3. Search for the term "WP Splash Image". Click "Install now". After installation is complete, click "Activate plugin" to turn the plugin on.
4. Scroll down the list of plugins to the "WP Splash Image" plugin, and click the "Settings" link.
5. Ensure that the boxes beside the following are all checked: Splash image activated, First load mode activated, Test mode activated.
6. There are a series of 4 tabs for different types of splash page content - Picture, Video, HTML, and Include. You can implement your overlay in a couple of different ways:

Option A: Go to the HTML tab, and select the radio button at the left of the blank box to turn this type of content on. Then paste the following code into the HTML box:

```
<a href="http://www.blackoutspeakout.ca">

</a>
```

Option B: Go to the Picture tab, and enter the Picture URL as <http://www.yourwebsite.com/blackoutspeakout.jpg> , and the Picture Link URL as <http://www.blackoutspeakout.ca>

IMPORTANT: For both option A and B, you need to change the section that says "yoursite.com" to the domain that your site uses.

7. Ensure that the boxes beside the following settings are not checked: Close esc function, Hide X, Disable shadow border, Fixed mode.
8. Set the splash height to 820, and the splash width to 650
9. Set the background colour to 000000.
10. Set the background opacity to 80%.
11. Set the display time to 0.
12. Click "Update Options".

Check to see if your website is now darkened.

If it is not, you will need to add a small piece of code to your theme template. Find your theme's header.php file, and add the following code immediately after the body tag.

```
<?php do_action('wsi_first_load_mode'); ?>
```

This will force the overlay to show up when the page is loaded. Save the header.php file.

Your website should now be darkened, with the Black Out Speak Out overlay appearing on every page. The user can click to close the overlay.

Fine tuning the configuration of the plugin...

With the above settings, the overlay appears for every page all the time. You probably want to configure it so that the overlay is only live for June 4 2012, and so that it only shows up once every so often.

To tune the configuration, do the following:

1. Return to the Settings screen for the plugin.
2. Remove the check from the "Test mode activated" box.
3. You will now have a few different options available at the bottom of the plugin settings screen. Scroll down and set the Start date and End date to June 4 2012. Set the Idle time to represent how often you want a given user to be shown the overlay.

And you're done!

Darkening a Drupal site using an overlay

Darkening your Drupal site can be done quickly and easily through the use of specific modules. There are a couple of modules that provide 'splash page' functionality. Be sure to use a module that is compatible with the Drupal version you are currently running. If you are running version 6 we suggest [Splash](#) and if you are running version 7 we suggest [Splashify](#). The solution described below shows you how to use a module that will present a user with the Black Out Speak Out dark page as an overlay on your site and will allow them to close the overlay to get to your regular website.

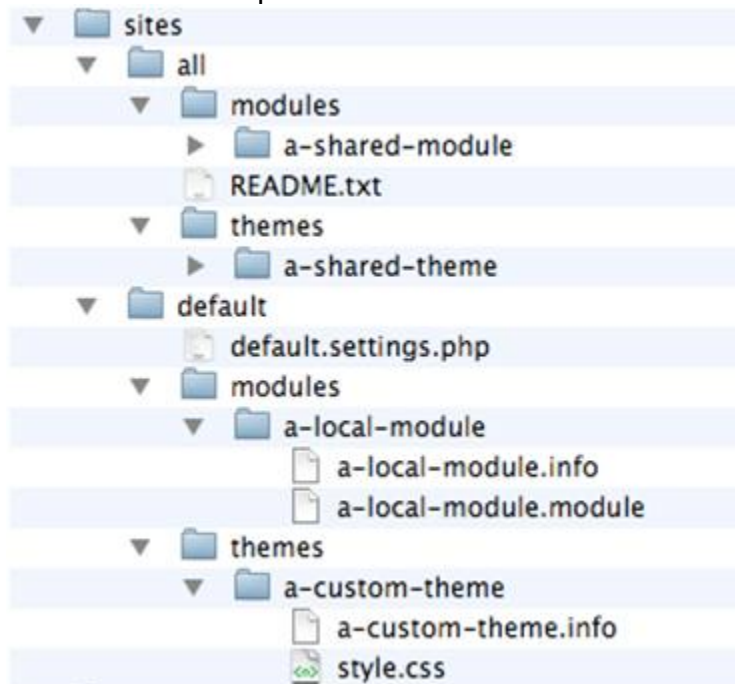
Depending on the version you are currently using, your experience may vary from the instructions listed below. Again, it is very important that you download a module that is compatible with the Drupal version you are currently running.

Installing modules

1. Locate the required module (Splash or Splashify) starting on the [Downloads](#) section.
2. Make sure the module has a version that matches that of your Drupal site. Drupal 5 modules and themes will not work on Drupal 6 or 7.
3. Click "Find out more" and read the notes. This gives you the chance to see if there is support for your release of Drupal. You can also look at pending bugs and feature requests - it might give you interesting insights in the project.
4. Download the release for your Drupal version.
5. Unzip the downloaded file (on Windows you can use a program like [7Zip](#)).
6. Extract the code to your ***/sites/all/modules/{modulename}*** or ***/sites/all/themes/{themename}*** folder. If you are running multiple sites and you do not want the module to be available in all sites, you could extract the files to the ***/sites/{sitename}/modules/*** or ***/sites/{sitename}/themes/*** folders.

7. To finish you should enable the module or theme in the administration section of your site.

You should end up with a folder structure like:



NOTE: There are several reports/bugs for the Splash module that suggest it may not work properly on all sites. If you are unable to get the **“Recommended release” (6.x-2.7)** to work on your site, then try installing the **“Development release” (6.x-2.x-dev)** found below the **“Recommended release”** in the download section. You will need to disable and uninstall the existing module before using the dev version. Please be sure to leave plenty of time to test the Splash module before June 4th.

Additional instructions of how to use the modules

If you require additional information on how to use the modules, you can find detailed instructions on drupal.org.

Detailed instructions on how to use [Splash](#)

Detailed instructions on how to use [Splashify](#)

If you have followed the instructions and still need help, please contact:

Ben Parsons at bparsons@ecojustice.ca