

Greetings,

Some announcements for those of you following the air quality issue here in the valley and beyond.

The annual **BC Clean Air Forum** is happening March 4-6, 2008 in Penticton. See <http://cleanairplan.ca> for details.

The Airshed Management Society is beginning plans for our **2008 AGM and Community Forum**. This year's event will happen the week of May 12th. Details will be posted on our website.

Air quality readings from monitoring stations in the valley and beyond can be checked on-line. The website address recently changed to:
http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/aqiis/aqi.bulletin?group_name=SMITHERS
. The username and password are the same: PUBLIC.

The Woodstove Exchange Program continues – see local retailers and our website for details on the excellent rebates available. AMS continues to offer \$250, the Town of Smithers is now offering an additional \$250, Village of Burns Lake is offering an additional \$500, and the District of Houston is offering an additional \$300. You must be a resident of the municipality to qualify for their additional rebate. Over 200 stoves have been exchanged to date.

Libraries in all communities have moisture meters for testing the dryness of your firewood supply available for loan. Your wood should be between 12 and 19% for the best heat value and the lowest emissions. Other educational tips are available on our website and on DVDs also available at libraries.

A clean air colouring comic book is now available – copies can be picked up from our booths at tradeshow or can be ordered directly from the Ministry of Environment in Smithers. We'd like to see these books in waiting rooms at medical clinics and need help with distribution. Ask for Colin Macleod or Ben Weinstein.

An anti-idling campaign is being planned now that funding to hire two students from May to August has been confirmed. The students will

be collecting baseline data, monitoring idling “hot spots” and delivering community outreach programs throughout the Skeena region. **FACT:** Modern vehicle engines do not need to be warmed in the winter before they are driven. Ever since electronics were introduced to control engines, the need to warm up a vehicle before driving it has been eliminated. So now, sitting in your car in the winter waiting for it to warm up is a waste of time and gas, increases pollution, and does not protect your engine at all. To make matters worse, emissions from an idling vehicle in winter conditions are more than double the normal level immediately after a "cold start".

A technical workshop for getting more value from wood residue is being planned for April 11 and 12 in Smithers. This workshop has limited space and priority is being given to local small sawmill operators. For details, check our website under the Resource Management Burning Info Centre <http://cleanairplan.ca/fhdb.shtml> or contact the Ministry of Environment in Smithers. Ask for Colin Macleod.

Beehive Burner Update – Houston Forest Products shut down their burner on November 19th, 2007 after 29 years of burning bark. All of the material from the mill is now being hogged and sent to Eurocan Pulp and Paper in Kitimat, where it is burned in the boiler to offset natural gas consumption.

That’s it for now – watch for the next update in March.