

Air Quality Council Meeting: November 19th, 2015

Notes from the meeting held on Thursday, November 19th, 2015 at 2:00 pm in the ACRD Downstairs Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

Present:	Judy Carlson Dave Jarrett Andrew McGifford (ACRD Environmental Services) Earle Plain (MOE) Gary Swann Sarah Thomas (Chair)
Regrets:	Larry Cross (Catalyst Paper) Ashley Popovich (Catalyst Paper) Sharie Minions (City of Port Alberni) John McNabb (ACRD) Patty Edwards (MLA's Office) Tim Pley (Fire Department)

1. Chair – Updates (Sarah)

AQC Representation

ACHN

Sarah presented to the Alberni-Clayoquot Health Network and put in a request/call to that table for a health rep.

Hupucasath

Interested in being involved but don't have resource capacity to be on the council at this time. At present they would like to receive correspondence and potentially work with us on the woodstove exchange. Infrastructure and install costs are a concern.

Tsashaht

Interested in more information. Sarah forwarded AQC mandate and info to CEO. Also spoke to the Housing manager.

Huu-ay-at

John mentioned interest. Actively promoted the Burn-it-Smart workshop. Have not heard back re: interest in the council. Andrew will follow up in his meeting next week.

CanTimber

Production has not yet begun. Awaiting federal permits. Will plan a tour for the AQC once production has commenced. Indication that CanTimber is considering installing an EBAM for 1 year at least to do some confirmatory monitoring.

Cycling Advocacy

There is an opportunity for the AQC to support cycling advocacy in town and to promote cycling as an alternative to driving to save on air emissions. In BC, vehicles account for 60% of air pollution (BC Lung).

	<p>The AQC was supportive of Sarah pursuing this. Good timing since the City Food Security and Climate Change Committee is interested in promoting cycling and can put their weight behind it.</p> <p>It was also discussed that vehicle emission clinics (historically were offered through the Ministry of Transportation and Highways) could be a good public education tool to discuss vehicle emissions.</p> <p>Anti-idling campaign would be good at some point as well.</p>

2. Signage/Advisory Protocol (Earle)

MOE Advisory Notifications	MOE Air Advisory notices will now include the new provisions from the updated City of Port Alberni Fire Control Bylaw which bans all outdoor burning within the city during times of poor air quality. That way the information is all in one place for people.
Digital signs, Echo and Multiplex	Progress is underway to utilize digital sign boards at Echo and the multiplex during air quality advisories to announce “Air Quality Advisory – No Outdoor Burning”

3. City Bylaws Update

Fire Control Bylaw	Allows fines. Allows fire dept to ban burning during poor air quality events.
Backyard burn ban	City passed a back yard burn ban effective April 2016. Work is underway to plan an event in February or March as a means of launching into this ban. It will hopefully also get action at the ACRD to work towards unifying their bylaws to follow the City.
Bylaw Unification with ACRD?	<p>Potential challenges: How does it get enforced? How is it payed for? >> Conservation Officers did an audit program a few years ago. This worked well. Earle is looking into this to see if we can do such a program again for next burn season.</p> <p>A lot of it is education. Check CVRD. How do they approach it? One approach would be to instigate a guidelines document which could be promoted and distributed. Means of education. Let people know the hazards of burning plastic, leaves etc. Burning leaves for example is completely unnecessary and are actually a good compost material.</p>

Compost	<p>Could leaves get picked up? City / ACRD program? Organics pilot program might be starting. Could/would this include yard waste (grass, leaves)? Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oak Bay say has a vacuum truck which goes along the curb and gathers the leaves. • Qualicum has a branch chipping program which occurs twice annually.
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4. Slash Burning and Air Quality Data (Earle)

The last air advisory (Nov 5).
Challenges with close proximity to town.

Slash burning put particulate matter over the top in town during the first week of November. Residential woodsmoke is a real issue as well.

Issued the advisory on the 5th. In theory could have been on 4th but there was some hope that it would clear out. Unfortunately it didn't.

Earle showed graphs depicting particulate matter and wind speed and direction over the days surrounding the last air advisory. From the data, one can see that air pollution from woodstoves is significant and separate from the issue of slash burning. All of the sources need to be reduced.

MOE Regulations

Would be good to get better images of air events in order to pin point sources etc.

New regulations are in the works regarding land clearing burning. Hopefully they will be finalized before next burn season. In draft stages now.

New regulations include high, medium, low scale to reflect the differing health risk. High (proximity to population density of 200 people per square kilometer) is proposing to have buffers of 500m from the property line. Still results based and complaint driven.

Smoke management regulation – Large forestry companies sign on to voluntarily comply with stricter burning regulation that includes curing material for 9-24 months so that would not be burned when it is green, hence reducing pollution.

Currently limit the number of piles that any given company can burn at the same time. It was suggested that perhaps it would be good to limit the total number of piles and then have people bid for them and perhaps have a permit fee which would pay for the cost of air quality monitoring etc.

Air Quality Data	Port Alberni Air Quality Data report should be finished by the end of the year. In draft form now. This report compares data from the Alberni Elementary School to data from the Firehall monitoring that happened last year.
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5. Wood Stove Exchange (Andrew)

How did the program finish up last Spring?	23 stoves were exchanged last spring.
What is the status of the current Program?	17 vouchers that remained for the program from September-December are all fully assigned.
	The program has gone well. There have been some wrinkles with new retailers coming on board et cetera but the issues are getting ironed out. Andrew has been helping out with the coordination of the program from the ACRD side.
2016 funding application	ACRD applied for 50 more stoves. Have not heard back yet.

6. Burn it Smart Workshop (Sarah)

Burn it Smart Workshop	<p>Part of the Woodstove Exchange AQC is organizing it in conjunction with the Port Alberni Firehall.</p> <p>Will be November 21, 2015. 2-4pm at the Port Alberni Firehall.</p> <p>Come if you can! Everyone is welcome.</p>
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7. Tire Derived Fuel – Larry and Ashley were unable to make it so this discussion is postponed for the next meeting.

Next Meeting

January. Date to be confirmed.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.