

Air Quality Council Meeting: November 17, 2016

Notes from the meeting held on Thursday November 17th, 2016 at 2:00 pm in the ACRD Board Room, 3008 Fifth Avenue, Port Alberni, BC

Present:	Chris Alemany (City of Port Alberni) Jimmie Hodgson (Guest from Island Timberlands) Patty Edwards (MLA's Office) Dave Jarrett (Community member) John McNabb (ACRD) Earle Plain (MOE) Sarah Thomas (Chair) Tim Pley (City of Port Alberni) Jade Yedia (Island Health) Stephanie Bruvall (Island Health) Kazuhiro (Kaz) Takeuchi (Island Health) Russ Widdess
Regrets:	Judy Carlson Andrew McGifford (ACRD Environmental Services) Larry Cross (Catalyst Paper) Ashley Popovich (Catalyst Paper) Gary Swann (Community member)

The agenda be approved.

The minutes from the October 13, 2016 meeting of the Air Quality Council were accepted as distributed. Moved and seconded. Carried.

Introductions and Roundtable Updates

City

- New fire chief will be the new liaison to the AQC. Starts November 28, 2016.
- May 2017, woodstove bylaw comes into effect requiring removal of all old woodstoves
- Cantimber stack testing occurred last week. Results will be forthcoming.

ACRD

- Airport – no emissions
- ACRD signed onto the Climate Action Charter
- Looking at landfill emissions and ways to reduce emissions without gas extractions (composting one such option)

Ministry of Environment

- Provincial solid fuel burning appliance regulation came out earlier this year and increases the standard for wood appliances sold.
- Cantimber stack testing occurred last week. VIHA, FNHA, MOE, Tseshaht had a tour with Golder. Consultant is good and has a lot of background in this area.

Island Health

- Bring health evidence and health data to the table
- New Port Alberni Environmental Health Officer has been brought on. This increases the capacity to support initiatives in the region.

Broad, Regional Comments

- Land clearing impacts due to burning out Cherry Creek again.

1. Wildfire Hazard Abatement – Jimmie Hodgson (Manager Forest Operations, Island Timberlands)

What legislative requirements exist for dealing with forest debris?

Wildfire Act (applies on crown and private land)

- Requires assessment of fire risk
- Mandates that excess slash not be left on the landscape

Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation

- Regulates conditions, duration of burns

South Eastern Vancouver Island Burn Plan & Northern Strategy

Burn Plans are additional, voluntary, practices which companies (including Island Timberlands) sign on to.

- Discusses number of piles in an airshed per day
- Curing wood prior to burning
- Appropriate stacking of debris

Also check venting with one pile to make sure the venting is actually occurring according to the forecast ('test vent fire').

When burning within 500m of a residence notify each resident with a letter advising homeowners of the burn, informing about the source, practices being employed, etc.

What are considerations when deciding to burn?

- Consider proximity to neighbours
- Slope
- Timing
- Financial feasibility
- Indices, Venting, and Wind direction

Wildfire risk considered paramount.

What options are considered for dealing with the slash?

- Burn
- Firewood
- Hog
- Dispersal

Firewood

Sell permits
Particularly effective when cut blocks are close to town
Aim to have the whole cut block get used

	Very effective on the east coast of Vancouver Island. Not as effective here as there are more sources of wood. And crown land gives free permits.
Hog	Challenging to find cost effective options. Proximity to market is important
Dispersal	Distributing the slash back over the forest floor to provide fiber for the next rotation. Ensure can still see the forest floor. Don't want it completely covered. Rule of thumb – 'can see the ground'. Done when away from urban areas and when there isn't too much material. In urban areas greater fear of wildfire (concern about cigarettes, campers, etc especially since the debris is at the road side).
What else can be done to reduce the amount of material burnt?	- Road building to facilitate salvage - Dealing with the material in the forest rather than bringing it all to the road side and then dealing with it. - Working with staff and contractors at all levels so that everyone from the fallers to the quality control crew are looking for timber that can't be sold and leaving it standing or in the forest at least. Biomass boilers another option.

2. Woodstove Research Project

Aim	To get a better understanding of woodstove usage in Port Alberni.
Survey approach	Door to door. Target a specific number of households in each neighbourhood with the hope of getting a representative sample. Base off Smithers model Have canvassers bring education material with them to give out at the door. Roll out this winter. Caution – be clear what our approach is. Don't try to do too much in the surveys. Focus on woodstove piece.

Next Meeting – January 19th, 2016, 2pm, ACRD Board Room.

Adjourn – Meeting adjourned at 3:40 pm.

