



Biannual Briefing Note

Date: 9 October 2015

Issued by: Angela Wheeler

Agency: Northern Health

Questions

1.) What have you done in the last 12 months?

- Northern Health continued its internal air quality education and awareness capacity through our air quality brochures/banners, and air quality health promotion slides for rotational use on screens at hospital and waiting rooms. We provide air quality awareness information on our website;
- Northern Health continues to post air quality advisories on our website and social media sites. We have been collaborating with the City of Prince George and the Ministry of Environment on a Smoky Skies Notice for wildfire events;
- Northern Health recently formed an internal Air Quality Steering Committee to provide leadership and support around direction on indoor and outdoor air quality in Northern Health;
- Northern Health continued work with the Health Authority Air Quality Council in the development of resources and support for Public Health Protection staff to help increase the air quality capacity;
- Northern Health responded to a number of air discharge permit amendments and airshed assessments in Northern Health to ensure that health impacts and the Phase 3 Plan Objectives were taken into account by agency decision makers;
- Northern Health continued to incorporate fuel mileage as an important purchasing decision for Northern Health fleet vehicle, requiring departments to write a business case for any vehicles other than a fuel efficient compact sedan.
- Northern Health continued to be involved in radon education through promotions, presentations and awareness campaigns.

1 b.) Does the action address a goal and/or strategy from the Phase III Plan? If yes, please list the goal and/or strategy.

Yes, it addresses the following strategies from the Phase 3 Plan:

- “Through research and education, increase public understanding of air quality issues, advisories, potential solutions and success stories”

- “Reduce emissions from wood burning heating systems and backyard recreation fires by encouraging woodstove upgrades ..., increasing knowledge of proper burning practices and increase awareness of the City’s Clean Air Bylaw”
- “Encourage implementation of Province’s regional-office developed off-setting policy for new or expanding industry in Prince George
- “Encourage continuous improvement and use of best achievable technology for current, expanding and new permitted industry”
- “Encourage alternative transportation”
- “Encourage clean-burning practices for back-yard recreational fires”
- “Reduce emissions from space heating”
- “Facilitate public forums and event that promote and encourage clean air practices”
- “Improve awareness for air quality issues and potential solutions”

What are you planning to do in the next 12 months?

Over the next 12 months, Northern Health will continue to build on the existing initiatives and will look for opportunities to further expand our air quality program. While we expect that the below list will likely be modified and expanded based on opportunities that may arise, some upcoming air quality work that we expect to be involved in for the Prince George airshed, as well as Northern Health as a whole includes:

- Utilizing the Air Quality Steering Committee to better coordinate our approach to air quality and allow us to better support air quality management in Prince George as well as in other communities in the north;
- Finalize and implement the Smoky Skies notices prior to the start of the next fire season;
- Establishing a radon awareness and testing program for daycare facilities across the north;
- Increasing the capacity of staff to focus on supporting air quality management.

What is your long-term plan to meet the 2016 goal?

Northern Health’s goal over the long-term is to continue educating and bringing awareness to the public on air quality and radon issues to encourage behavior change and action. We plan on doing this by identifying opportunities within our own and partner organizations. We also expect to continue participating in policy and land-use decisions through the referral and public consultation process and by encouraging decision makers to incorporate health impacts and goals of the PGAIR’s Phase 3 Plan into their planning decisions. It is also our goal to further increase the air quality capacity at Northern Health.

Please indicate your self-assessed progress during the past 12 months:

Low



Medium

High