



# Air Quality Briefing Note

**Date:** December 1, 2020

**Issued by:** Gail Roth

**Agency:** Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy

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## Description

Each member of PGAIR is requested to provide an annual update on implementation activities related to the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. Please identify your agency's relevant activities (existing and planned) in the template provided. The information from these reports will be posted on the PGAIR website. The next briefing note due date is **December 1, 2020**.

## PM 2.5 Goal:

To achieve an annual particulate matter average concentration of 8 micrograms per cubic meter of air, with an aspirational goal of 5 micrograms per cubic meter.

## Questions

### What have you done in the last 12 months to support the Strategic Plan goals?

Goal 1: Strive towards meeting long-term annual fine particulate matter (PM2.5) targets of 8 ug/m<sup>3</sup> (BC's Annual Air Quality Objective) and 5 ug/m<sup>3</sup> (aspirational community target).

Goal 2: Support the development of new research projects in the airshed that enhance our understanding of particulate matter and odour emissions sources.

Goal 3: Support a core group of agencies that meets and communicates regularly on air quality initiatives, emerging issues, and solutions.

Goal 4: Continue to support the regional Woodstove Exchange Program to bring the total particulate matter reduction to 35 tonnes/year.

Goal 5: Support the development or enhancement of air quality roundtables/groups in other BC communities, using lessons learned from PGAIR.

In 2020, the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy (ENV) supported the five (5) 2017-2021 PGAIR Strategic Plan goals by:

### Funding

- Providing direct funding to PGAIR and the Prince George Monitoring Working Group (PG MWG).
- Funding the Provincial Woodstove Exchange Program.

### Supporting Stewardship

- Serving as a PGAIR Operations Committee member.
- Arranging a meeting between Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy and PGAIR to provide an opportunity for PGAIR to highlight its successes and the importance of local airshed stewardship.
- Participating as a Technical Committee Member for the Prince George Emissions Inventory and Dispersion Modelling Update Project.
- Completing a 10-year air quality overview to support PGAIR in the early phases of the next 5-year Strategic Plan.
- Providing administrative and technical input to support the PG MWG in their operations and decision-making.
- Supporting neighbouring communities with airshed management initiatives and sharing lessons learned and resources developed by PGAIR.

### Research

- Providing technical support to a research study being conducted in Prince George that is investigating the toxicity of springtime roaddust.

### Public Notifications

- Issuing public health notifications (Air Quality Advisories and Smoky Skies Bulletins) when air quality conditions deteriorate.
- Issuing a province-wide open burning restriction for all populated areas in the province during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The objective of the burning restrictions was to help protect populations from exposure to excess air pollution and thereby reduce the risk of susceptibility to respiratory viral infections during a sensitive period.

### Air Quality Related Legislation

- Providing ongoing support to local stakeholders with respect to education and interpretation of the Open Burning Smoke Control Regulation.

### Air Quality Monitoring and Auditing

- Updating the BC Field Sampling Manual, Part B: Air and Air Emissions Testing. This document sets out quality assurance and quality control requirements, sampling procedures, protocols, and equipment that must be followed by permit holders for environmental monitoring and sample collection.
- Operating the provincial air quality network which includes a core monitoring site downtown Prince George and two meteorological stations.
- Administering the provincial air audit program which ensures the continuing quality of data from ambient monitors (that measure the outside air) and continuous emissions monitors (that measure conditions inside industrial stacks).

- Providing data polling, validation, storage, and publishing services for the PG MWG network.

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

ENV will continue to engage in the operational activities mentioned in the previous section. Specific initiatives planned for 2021 include:

- Complete a review of the ambient monitoring network in Prince George.
- Begin a public consultation process to update the provincial air quality objective for NO<sub>2</sub>.

**What is your long-term plan to meet the 2017-2021 goal?**

- Continue to provide technical support to the PGAIR and the PG MWG.
- Continue to provide ambient monitoring in Prince George.

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

Low

Medium

High