

GPAZ NEWSLETTER

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MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT INTRODUCES GPAZ AND CITY OF REGINA AIR STUDY ON CLEAN AIR DAY

On Wednesday June 4, 2014, Environment Minister Ken Cheveldayoff officially announced the formation of the Great Plains Air Zone and presented Mayor Fougere with the Regina Air Quality Study. The one year study sampled at 25 different sites with passive, mobile and fixed monitoring locations.



Clean Air Day June 4, 2014

CLEAN AIR DAY – JUNE 4, 2014

Minister Cheveldayoff presented Mayor Fougere the Regina Air Quality Study and officially announced the formation of GPAZ to the public on Clean Air Day. A few members of GPAZ were in attendance and had the opportunity to tour the Ministry's mobile air monitoring lab. The SAML (Saskatchewan Air Monitoring Lab) was used in the Regina Air Monitoring study, along with passive and fixed monitoring locations. The study showed the Air Quality Health Index was low for health risks 97% of the time. It was thought vehicle emissions and forest fires were the likely cause of the higher Index numbers for the remaining 3% of the time.

You can access the report at:

<http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=c54a7d47-c51c-4454-a24c-e16e264a4052>

Great Plains Air Zone Meetings

GPAZ members and Board members met on February 19, 2014 and April 3, 2014. A few highlights of the February meeting:

- National Pollutant Release Inventory data to be used for emission fees
- Ex. Director to put together funding scenario for next meeting
- Slogan – We all have a share in quality air!
- Committees discussed, volunteers solicited.

April 3, 2014

- GPAZ.org website approved
- Discussion of possible passive monitoring network
- Discussion of a logo for GPAZ
- Presentation of several funding formulas for the members
- The members agreed on funding formula of \$700 + \$8.00 tonne

Slogan “We all have a share in quality air”

UPDATE TO MEETINGS

The GPAZ website is up and running! We need some pictures of scenery in the zone. Anyone who has a great digital photo they would like to share – please forward to gpazair@sasktel.net

Invoicing for the fiscal year has been completed. The invoices were based on the 2012 NPRI data. The 2013 data is now available on the NPRI website, which may lead to some confusion between the invoice and what is currently on the default page of their website.

The logo that received the overwhelming support of the members:



THE LAZY HAZY DAYS OF SUMMER IN SASKATCHEWAN

AHH! Summer finally arrived in Saskatchewan in July. After a cool wet spring, I'm sure it was welcomed by all. But in early July, the sunny days were tainted by smoke from forest fires originating in Alberta, British Columbia and the Northwest Territories. Although the smoke may have originated over 1,000 kilometres away, it affected all of the province.

Though it spawned a few beautiful sunset pictures, many people with breathing problems can be severely limited in their activities during these events. The effects of smoke run from irritation of the eyes and respiratory tract to more serious disorders, including asthma, bronchitis, reduced lung function and premature death. Fine particulate matter is also linked (alone or with other pollutants) with a number of significant respiratory and cardiovascular-related effects.

But what pollutants are in the smoke that can cause such severe health effects? Just about everything! Smoke is made up primarily of carbon dioxide, water vapor, carbon monoxide, particulate matter, hydrocarbons and other organics, nitrogen oxides and trace minerals. The composition of smoke varies with fuel type: different wood and vegetation are composed of varying amounts of cellulose, lignin, tannins and other polyphenolics, oils, fats, resins, waxes and starches which produce different compounds when burned.

In general, particulate matter is the major pollutant of concern from wildfire smoke. Particulate is a general term for a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air. Particulate from smoke tends to be very small (less than one micron in diameter) and, as a result, is more of a health concern than the coarser particles that typically make up road dust. Particulate matter from wood smoke has a size range near the wavelength of visible light (0.4 – 0.7 micrometers). This makes the particles excellent scatterers of light and, therefore, excellent reducers of visibility.

Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas, produced as a product of incomplete combustion. It is produced in the largest amounts during the smoldering stages of the fire.

Hazardous air pollutants are present in smoke, but in far less concentrations than particulate and carbon monoxide. The most common are acrolein, benzene and formaldehyde.

So now we know, when we can see what we are breathing, it may be best for us to take precautions and limit our exposure.

Info from : Wildfire Smoke - A Guide for Public Health Officers





GPAZ Meeting April 3, 2014

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NEXT MEETING OF THE GREAT PLAINS AIR ZONE

As summer will soon be slipping into fall, we would like to meet in mid September to discuss future activities. The date and time of the next meeting will be sent out by email. A reminder to all members, please remit membership and emission fees as soon as possible. Invoices were sent to member companies in June and July. Thank you to those who have responded promptly!

HAVE INFORMATION TO SHARE?

If you or your organization has an article or information pertaining to air quality, improvements to air quality control equipment, or upgrades to processes that improve air quality, please forward it so we can include it in our next newsletter.



GREAT PLAINS AIR ZONE

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GREAT PLAINS AIR ZONE MEMBERS