



## MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT ADOPTS A NEW ENVIRONMENTAL CODE

On Monday November 3, 2014, Environment Minister Scott Moe announced the adoption of a new environmental code using a results based approach that clearly defines the required environmental outcomes, empowering organizations to determine how environmental results will be achieved.

### MINISTRY ADOPTS ENVIRONMENTAL CODE – NOV. 3, 2014

Minister of Environment Scott Moe announced the adoption of the Saskatchewan Environmental Code, a first in Canada, as the cornerstone of the province’s new results based approach to environmental regulation. “The Saskatchewan Environmental Code is based on a new regulatory approach that has environmental protection at its foundation,” Moe said. “This streamlined regulatory process enables municipalities and industry to keep pace with growth, while ensuring Saskatchewan’s environment remains healthy.”

The environmental code will come into force in stages in 2015 to allow affected industries to prepare for the change. Chapters dealing with forest management will come into force January 5, 2015, with the remaining chapters in effect on June 1, 2015. Activities not included in the first edition of the code will continue to be regulated as before. The Environmental Code contains 16 chapters referencing five regulations and 28 environmental standards. The Industrial Air Source Chapter comes into effect June 1, 2015.

You can access the code and other information at:

<http://www.environment.gov.sk.ca/code>

### Great Plains Air Zone Meetings

GPAZ members and Board members met on November 3, 2014. The Science Committee met twice - on October 7 and December 10, 2014. A few highlights of the November meeting:

- A presentation was given on the recently released “City of Regina Air Monitoring Study” by a representative of the Ministry of Environment.
- A review of past air monitoring studies in GPAZ was presented.
- Science Committee provided an update of the first meeting.
- Committees, finances and air monitors discussed.

#### Science Committee Meetings

- Review of monitoring equipment – pros and cons
- Review of current industry air monitoring networks
- Develop a database to aid in determining priority air monitoring



Photo by Rebecca Perras

- Review of air dispersion modelling in GPAZ
- Discussion of newer portable monitoring equipment for GPAZ

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*Slogan “We all have a share in quality air”*

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## UPDATE TO MEETINGS

The GPAZ website is up and running! We need some pictures of scenery or your industry at work in the zone. Anyone who has a great digital photo they would like to share – please forward to [gpazair@sasktel.net](mailto:gpazair@sasktel.net)

The Science Committee has been hard at work looking at past air monitoring activities in the air zone and air modelling completed by industry in the past few years. This work will help determine the most effective and efficient method to prioritize representative air monitoring sites for GPAZ.

## HEALTH STUDY ATTEMPTS TO SHOW POSSIBLE AUTISM LINKS TO AIR POLLUTION

A recent news release cited a study that attempts to link the rising number of cases of autism in the United States to air pollution. With autism on the rise in the U.S., research is increasingly citing exposure to air pollution as a contributing factor. This new study adds to evidence suggesting that women who live in areas with high levels of fine particulate matter during pregnancy may be at significantly higher risk of having a child with autism, compared with pregnant women who reside in areas with low levels of fine particulate matter.

Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), is a complex developmental disability or neurodevelopmental disorder, which influences how a child processes information as well as sees the world. There is a wide degree of variation in the way it affects people, presenting different challenges and symptoms. The autism spectrum disorders belong to a category of five childhood-onset conditions known as pervasive developmental disorders (PDD). Autism is not a single disorder, but a spectrum of closely-related disorders with a shared core of symptoms. Every individual on the autism spectrum has problems to some degree with social skills, empathy, communication, and flexible behavior. But the level of disability and the combination of symptoms varies tremendously from person to person. In fact, two children with the same diagnosis may look very different when it comes to their behaviors and abilities.

Several studies have explored associations of air pollution with ASD, using the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) hazardous air pollutants models from distances to freeways, or local models for specific pollutants. These studies suggest increased odds of having a child with ASD with higher exposures to diesel particulate matter (PM), several metals, criteria pollutants, and some organic materials as well as closer proximity to a freeway.

“Air pollution contains various toxicants that have been found to be associated with neurotoxicity and adverse effects on the fetus in utero. Airborne particles are covered with various contaminants, and have been found to penetrate the subcellular environment and induce oxidative stress and mitochondrial damage in vitro”.

“Our findings support the possibility of an effect of maternal exposure to air pollution during pregnancy, and especially during the third trimester, on the development of ASD in her child. It suggests that air pollution is a modifiable risk factor for autism, and reduced exposure during pregnancy could lead to lower incidence of ASD and reduce the substantial, increasing economic burden of ASD on families and on society. Understanding the biological mechanism that may underlie the association by which PM exposure and ASD could provide important insight to ASD pathogenesis”.

Info from : Autism Spectrum Disorder and Particulate Matter Air Pollution before, during, and after Pregnancy: A Nested Case–Control Analysis within the Nurses’Health Study II Cohort



*Photo by Rebecca Perras*

## Contact Us

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## NEXT MEETING OF THE GREAT PLAINS AIR ZONE

At our last meeting it was determined a general meeting would take place after the Science Committee meeting. Unfortunately the Science Committee did not meet until December 10, 2014, therefore the next meeting will be in mid to late January. The date and time of the next meeting will be sent out by email.

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.

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## GREAT PLAINS AIR ZONE

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## GREAT PLAINS AIR ZONE MEMBERS