

Tackling Particulate Matter (PM 2.5) Levels in Red Deer

Forty-two stakeholders from local government industry, business, non government organizations and the general public came together on Tuesday, January 13th to hear more about the recent situation of Fine Particulate Matter (PM_{2.5}) air pollution in the Red Deer area.

Hosted by Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development (ESRD), the session was designed to inform participants about the details of the PM_{2.5} issue in the Red Deer area, to outline the intent and process for developing the response plan, and to provide an opportunity for participants to have input on the development of a response plan.

Session presenters included the Alberta Environmental Monitoring Evaluation and Reporting Agency, ESRD,



Environment Canada and PAMZ.

Based on the ESRD's 2009-2011 assessment, the PM_{2.5} level at the Red Deer Riverside air monitoring station exceeded the Canada-wide Standards (CWS), and therefore a plan must be put in place to address this problem.

In collaboration with local stakeholders, ESRD is developing a Red Deer PM_{2.5} Response plan that includes actions to reduce fine particulate matter levels in the Red Deer area to below the national standards. The response will be science-based, effective and implementable.

The plan is expected to be completed in the spring and another stakeholder meeting will be held to review it.

August 1 Deadline for the \$2500 Martha Kostuch Scholarship

Young high school graduates living in Central Alberta can apply for the \$2500 Martha Kostuch Scholarship for 2015. **Deadline for submission is August 1, 2015 .**

Applicants can submit their application to sue@pamz.org or mail to P.O. Box 1020, Sundre, Alberta T0M 1X0.

The scholarship is open to high school graduates living in

the PAMZ region who wish to pursue a post-secondary education in a discipline that helps us understand, protect and improve aspects of our environment, like land, air, water, wildlife and biodiversity.

For more information about the scholarship criteria, go to www.pamz.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more information visit www.pamz.org

Earth Day
Sunday, April 19

12:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Kerry Wood Nature Centre
www.reddeer.ca/earthday

Eco Living Fair
Saturday, March 21

10:00 am - 5:30 pm
Red Deer College
For more information, go to:
www.EcoLivingEvents.ca

Clean Air Day
Wednesday, June 3

PAMZ Action HERO Awards presentation will take place.
Time and place TBA on www.pamz.org.

Environment Week
June 1-5

PAMZ, with its partners, is hosting a **Vehicle Emissions Testing Clinic, June 3**
Time and place TBA on www.pamz.org

Two Municipalities Join the Fight Against Idling

Lacombe County and the Town of Sylvan Lake are doing their part to improve air quality by reducing emissions from idling vehicles. Both organizations have partnered with PAMZ to pilot programs that will change idling behavior in their areas.



Town of Sylvan Lake (Right -FR to BK) Dave Brand, Joanne Gaudet, John Watson, Ron Lebsack meeting with the PAMZ Idle Free Committee (Left-FR to BK) Sue Arrison, Cajun Paradis, Lauren Maris, Sharina Kennedy.

The new partnerships are part of PAMZ’s efforts to create an idle-free toolkit that will help municipalities tackle idling in their jurisdictions, both internally as organizations and externally in their communities.

Lacombe County is spearheading this change in their own operations. As part of the County’s Environmental Management Plan, a committee has been formed to manage the issue of unnecessary vehicle idling and is examining current behavior of County employees.

Once the results have been evaluated, the committee will create an internal program to respond and will monitor progress

“By developing an internal program to reduce vehicle idling, Lacombe County is demonstrating its commitment to environmental management for internal operations, while providing an educational opportunity for our community to learn from our progress,” said Cajun Paradis, Acting Environmental Coordinator with Lacombe County.

Sylvan Lake’s Town Council voted to join the movement in December 2014 to demonstrate their commitment to a greener, more sustainable community. Town staff are now working closely with PAMZ to outline their program.

“The Town of Sylvan Lake, much like Lacombe County, prides itself on our sustainable practices, and efforts in environmental conservation; taking a leadership role and joining PAMZ with its idle-free initiative was an easy decision for Council and staff,” said Sean McIntyre, Mayor of the Town of Sylvan Lake.

An important feature of both projects is they will be evaluated with pre and post surveys to see what strategies worked and if there was a change in idling behavior. When the pilot programs are complete, the results and best practices will be shared with other PAMZ municipalities to assist them with their own idle-free initiatives.

2nd Permanent Air Quality Monitoring Site in Red Deer

This past December, PAMZ established a second permanent Air Quality Monitoring site at the Lancaster Reservoir located in the city’s southeast at the corner of 30 Avenue and Lancaster Drive. Data collected at the new site and the original site located on Riverside Drive, near Three Mile Bend, will provide a more balanced understanding of Red Deer’s air quality.

Because of its location, away from industrial sources, the Lancaster site is expected to provide air quality data that is more representative of the majority of Red Deer residents’ exposure to air pollutants.



Lancaster Air Quality Monitoring Site

PAMZ has been monitoring air quality at the Lancaster site since November 2012 in order to assess its suitability as a permanent site.

Early in 2014, the PAMZ Technical Working Group concluded it was a suitable monitoring location and work began on making the site permanent.

While the site is now fully operational, some fencing and landscaping work remains to be completed after the spring thaw to help it fit into its surrounding setting.

Data collected at Lancaster will be used to calculate an Air Quality Health Index (AQHI), which will help Red Deer residents understand what the local air quality means to their health. The AQHI is a tool that relates the air quality outdoors to a person’s health, using a scale from 1 to 10; the lower the number, the lower the risk.

The AQHI values from both the Lancaster and Riverside Drive sites can be viewed on the PAMZ website at www.pamz.org.



PAMZ Announces 2014 Photo Contest Winners

The 4th annual PAMZ photo contest received many great entries. There were two categories in this contest: Air Pollution (depicting dust, smog etc.) and People and the Environment (best expressing the theme “blue skies, bright future”). Prizes were \$750 for 1st place and \$250 for Runner-up in each category. Under the Air Pollution category, we also had an “honourable mention”. All the photos were outstanding and it was a tough decision for the judges. We thank everyone who entered and invite you to look at the winning photos below, on Facebook and on our website at www.pamz.org.

Air Pollution-1st prize

Erin Dyrland-Hazy Hay Field



Air Pollution-Runner-up

Brian Titus- Is this Pollution?



Air Pollution-Honourable mention

Jameelia Peuter-Park in the Fog



People and the Environment-1st prize

Cajun Paradis-Fly Fishing the Blackstone



People and the Environment-Runner-up

Cole Brown-Different Gardening Perspective



A Tribute to Reg Watson

This past fall, PAMZ lost one of its founding board members, Reg Watson. While working on his farm northeast of Sundre, Reg suffered a major stroke and succumbed to its effects five days later.

Reg was a retired civil engineer whose strong volunteering ethic had a major impact on a number of organizations, of which he belonged. His passion for the environment and desire to protect it led him to participate in discussions held in the Sundre-Caroline area in the mid-90s which led to the formation of PAMZ. A highly regarded member of the community, Reg's early involvement in our organization greatly contributed to its public credibility and helped PAMZ secure a strong foothold in the community.

Reg served twice as the chair of PAMZ's Board of Directors and right up to his passing was an active member on the Board and on the Technical Working Group.

A stickler for details, who did not shy away from asking tough questions, Reg rarely missed a meeting, almost always arriving early and well prepared. He was an outstanding ambassador for PAMZ and frequently represented the organization at workshops, forums, open houses and other public events.

Reg was very active in the Sundre community, a dedicated Olds Grizzly hockey fan and a regular attendee at University of Alberta Alumni events. He enjoyed long walks at his farm with his dog, Bogie and playing an early morning round of golf at his beloved Forest Heights Golf Course.

Reg is survived by his best friend and partner, Esther Johnston and his two daughters, Leslie and Megan.

PAMZ members will greatly miss Reg, both as a friend and colleague.



Reg Watson 1933-2014



BLUE SKIES BRIGHT FUTURE
WWW.PAMZ.ORG

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The Zone is a newsletter published three times a year by the Parkland Airshed Management Zone Association (PAMZ), a non-profit society established to monitor and manage air quality issues in the Parkland Region of Alberta. For more information about the association, visit our website or contact the PAMZ Executive Director, Kevin Warren at kevin@pamz.org.