



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **THE CARIBOO WOODSTOVE EXCHANGE PROGRAM DEEMED A SUCCESS**

**Quesnel, Williams Lake, & 100 Mile House** - A total of 76 "Old Belchers" were turned in for destruction during the recent woodstove exchange program. This is estimated to spare the Cariboo Region about 3,800 kg of emitted smoke, ash, and various gaseous compounds during the next burn season. "Although woodstove smoke is a small percentage of the overall emissions, it can significantly impact residential areas under inversion conditions that typically occur during the burn season," said Dora McMillan, Chair of the Quesnel Air Quality Roundtable.

During the program, which ran from April 20 to June 8 of this year, Cariboo residents were offered rebates to replace uncertified wood stoves with new USEPA emissions certified stoves that burn 1/3 less wood and reduce emissions entering the atmosphere by up to 90%. The program also applied to residents installing high efficiency gas stoves, pellet stoves, fireplaces and fireplace inserts.

This project reflected real community commitment. It was initiated by the Quesnel and Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtable Committees. Partners included fire departments, the Western Hearth Products Association, health and air quality experts, retailers, BC Gas, Wood Energy Technicians of BC, wood stove manufacturers, and the BC Lung Association.

The campaign aimed to raise public awareness of the importance of smoke-free burning. Informational workshops were offered to help people gain more heat and less smoke from their wood burning systems. Participants learned how to burn cleaner, more efficient fires. They were shown the difference between conventional air tight stoves and high efficiency wood stoves, and had the opportunity to ask questions of a number of experts.

Participants also learned that wood smoke contains Acrolein, Formaldehyde, Carbon Monoxide, Nitrogen Oxides, Volatile Organic Compounds, Dioxins and Furans, Fine Particulate Matter, and Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons – all considered harmful to human health.

The Quesnel and Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtables would like to thank all who contributed to make this program a success. Both Roundtables are considering another Woodstove Exchange Program for next Spring. "It was a great opportunity to clean up the winter air in our neighborhoods and make wood heat safer in our communities," said Williams Lake Mayor Ivan Bonnell, Chair of the Williams Lake Air Quality Roundtable Committee.

Further information: [http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/car/env\\_protection/index.html#woodstove](http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/car/env_protection/index.html#woodstove)

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