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Clean Air Bylaw to Ensure New Wood Stoves Meet Standards

New wood stove installations in Campbell River will soon have to be certified to the Canadian or U.S. standard. City Council unanimously endorsed recommendations by the City's Environmental Advisory Commission to amend the Clean Air Bylaw to regulate solid fuel burning appliance standards at last night's meeting.

"Since 1992, the City has led many initiatives to reduce fine particulate air pollution," says Mayor Charlie Cornfield. "The issue of wood stove smoke was the next step in reviewing air quality issues, and this incentive-based program will help us build on previous efforts to improve air quality."

"Exposure to smoke in our air-shed has been significantly reduced with the restriction of open burning, but smoke from wood stoves remains a significant issue in many areas," says Councillor Roy Grant, the Council liaison to the Environmental Advisory Commission. "Fine particulates, such as those found in wood smoke, were cited in a recent report by the Provincial Health Officer as the worst kind of air pollution in BC, and exposure to high levels of particulates can play a role in many kinds of respiratory diseases. The BC Lung Association confirms new technology stoves emit 70 per cent less pollution on average, and this is the standard we will uphold for new woodstove installations in Campbell River once the bylaw has been amended."

"New stoves are also more efficient than older solid fuel burning appliances, so they use less wood to provide more heat, and that's a smarter, greener use of our resources," the Mayor adds.

Mayor and Council also supported the Commission's recommendation to pursue the Provincial Wood Stove Exchange Program (PWEF). A community program offers rebates of up to \$250 as an incentive for residents voluntarily to replace older, smoky and less-efficient wood stoves with new low-emission appliances.

The Burn It Smart education program is a mandatory component of the PWEF. This provincial government assistance with general air shed planning offers marketing guidelines and ideas for community-based activities and workshops for participating communities.

The Province's initial goal through the program is to exchange 50,000 old woodstoves, potentially reducing particulate matter air pollution by 3,100 tonnes a year.

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