

April 5, 2013

Are you sending smoke signals? The Master Wood program can help.

Does your chimney smoke too much? After the first 20 minutes of starting a fire, the plumes of visible smoke coming from your chimney should be gone, indicating a clean and efficient burn. If your chimney continues to smoke, you could be wasting wood and money as well as creating unnecessary air pollution.

If you're sending smoke signals, then a Master Burner program home visit can help. A certified technician will visit your home to help troubleshoot your wood burning system so your burning will be efficient and safe, with minimal smoke and creosote build-up. As part of Campbell River's provincial Wood Stove Exchange program, the province has supplied free moisture meters, firewood wood carriers and a limited number of wood storage kits for those booking a master burner session. Your name will also be entered into a draw for two cords of dry firewood delivered to your door, courtesy of Burn Dry Wood (\$642 value).

"With many people already starting to collect their wood for next year's burning season, this is a great time to check over your entire wood-burning system," says Councillor Larry Samson. "One of the simplest things you can do is to check the moisture content of the wood you're burning with a moisture meter to ensure the wood's properly seasoned. The moisture meter is easy to use and you'll get one free during your session."

There are 11 spaces available and the program is open to all wood burners in Campbell River on a first-come, first-served until Apr. 30. Participants will be asked to complete a short survey form during the home visit.

While overall air quality in Campbell River ranks as "good," fine particulate matter from residential wood burning may exceed provincial ambient air quality objectives in low-lying areas. Fine particulate air pollution (including what's generated by older wood stoves) is the primary air quality concern in many less-populated areas of BC, including Campbell River. The BC Lung Association and the Provincial Health Officer note that the miniscule size of fine particulates makes them easily inhaled deep into the airway and lungs. This, and their highly toxic nature, contributes to chronic respiratory and cardiovascular conditions.

The Master Burner program is made possible through grant funding secured from the BC Lung Association with support from the Province of BC and the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association of Canada. Information on the Wood Stove Exchange Program and wood heating is available on the City website (www.campbellriver.ca).

To participate in the Master Burner Program, please contact Terri Martin at the City of Campbell River at 250-286-5711 or by email at terri.martin@campbellriver.ca.

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Contact: Terri Martin, Environmental Coordinator 250-286-5711