

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

For Immediate Release - Attention Editor

### **ROAD DUST ADVISORY IN EFFECT FOR Burns Lake**

March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011 – Smithers. The Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the Northern Health Authority has issued a Road Dust Advisory for Burns Lake and Houston because of high concentrations of road dust that are expected to persist until there is precipitation.

Avoid strenuous outdoor activities and stay indoors with windows and doors closed.

If you are experiencing symptoms such as continuing eye or throat irritation, chest discomfort, shortness of breath, cough or wheeze, follow the advice of your health care provider, particularly if you are elderly, have asthma, hay fever, breathing or lung conditions or if you react strongly to road dust.

#### **Tips to reduce your personal health risk:**

- Avoid roads with heavy vehicle traffic.
- If you stay indoors, keep windows and doors closed and reduce indoor sources of pollution, such as smoking, vacuuming and use of wood stoves.
- Continue to control medical conditions such as asthma, hay fever and chronic respiratory disease. If symptoms continue to be bothersome, seek medical attention.
- Maintaining good overall health is a good way to prevent health effects resulting from short-term exposure to air pollution.

#### **Voluntary Emission Reduction Actions Burns Lake and Houston:**

- Avoid the use of wood-burning stoves and fireplaces unless used as the sole source of residential heat.
- Where wood-stoves or fireplaces are the sole source of residential heat, use only CSA/EPA emissions approved wood-burning appliances and well-cured wood, and ensure an adequate supply of combustion air.
- Reduce the use and idling of vehicles.

#### **Additional Information:**

- This advisory has been triggered by high concentrations of road dust, measured as coarse particles, PM<sub>10</sub>, which have diameters 10 micrometres or smaller.
- The provincial air quality objective for coarse particles, PM<sub>10</sub>, is 50 micrograms per cubic metre, averaged over 24 hours. 24-Hour average PM<sub>10</sub> concentrations are summarized below for communities in Skeena Region and are current as of 8:00 AM, Friday March 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011.

Community	Burns Lake	Houston	Smithers	Terrace	Kitimat
24-Hour PM <sub>10</sub> Concentrations	99	69	40	32	13

- The current dusty conditions are caused by road traffic stirring up winter traction materials that have accumulated on roadways over the past winter. These conditions will persist until there is precipitation or the streets are cleaned.
- Real-time air quality information for B.C. communities can be found at: [www.bcairquality.ca](http://www.bcairquality.ca).

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