



SUNSHINE COAST CLEAN AIR SOCIETY
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Spring 2016

Passage of Smoking Control Bylaw in Gibsons & Sechelt Possible

by Bonnie Vankoughnett, Vancouver Coastal Health

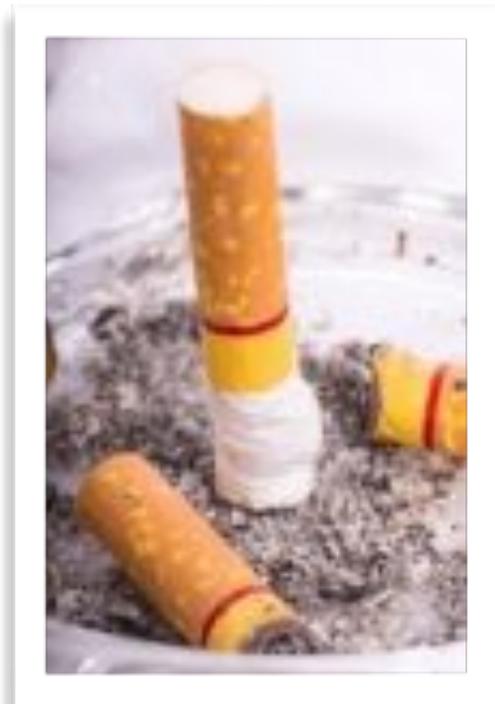
Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) continues to progress on the issue of Tobacco Reduction on the Sunshine Coast. VCH and the communities on the Sunshine Coast have identified Tobacco Reduction as a priority.

On March 1st, the Gibsons Town Council reviewed the draft Smoking Control Bylaw and report prepared by their staff. A date to report to the Sechelt Council is pending. It is during these meetings that we hope to have feedback from the councils on how we can move forward in passing this bylaw.

We have enhanced the existing bylaw by increasing the buffer zone to 9.5 meters around doors, windows, and air intakes

The bylaw would prohibit smoking on all hospitality patios, at all transit stops, on beaches, parks, playgrounds, in public places where people gather, including playing fields, outdoor or partly enclosed sport venues, stadiums, and sports facilities;

Also prohibited would be other smoked materials such as “weeds and other



substances”, water pipes, hookahs, e-cigarettes and “other tobacco products”.

We encourage businesses and residents to take a few minutes to write, email, fax or call your councillors & mayors in Gibsons and Sechelt as soon as possible. Your contribution will make a difference.

What We Have Done This Past Year: AGM Report

Elizabeth McNeill, President

2015 was a busy year.

With the *Wood Stove Exchange Program*, financially supported by the Ministry of the Environment (MoE) and B.C. Lung, we awarded \$11,500 in rebates for those residents on the Coast who changed their inefficient wood stove for an EPA more efficient wood stove. 30 wood stoves were discarded, and the owners were awarded a \$250 rebate.

To help us go from wood stoves to non-smoke heating units, the District of Sechelt (DOS) awarded the SCCAS a \$1500 grant to increase the rebate by an extra \$250 to six people living in the DOS when they trade out their old wood stove for an electric, propane, heat pump, or natural gas unit that doesn't create smoke pollution. These six added rebates will be awarded on a first come basis.

In April, we hosted a Symposium called *Keep Our Air Safe: What We Can Do*. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Douw Steyn, Air Quality Meteorologist at UBC, who was so well informed as well as an engaging speaker. We had an expert panel and then broke into discussion groups. These groups provided the SCCAS with topics that attendees wanted us to pursue. Direction and comments were excellent. The Symposium was possible with a grant from the SCRCD and a donation from HSPP.

We've put together a *Home Heating Guide* that's now available on our website. It rates different types of heating units based on minimizing air pollution, cost, and getting off fossil fuels.

We are active on social media. We reach 500 people on Facebook; 750 people follow us on Twitter.

We send educational Facebook ads to people on the Sunshine Coast due to the generosity of a grant from the DOS. We have an informative website, and we publish a newsletter twice a year that's emailed to our members and available on our website.

We continue our plan to install air monitors on the lower Sunshine Coast to gather baseline data about the quality of our air. A new air monitor will be installed in Gibsons by the MoE in 2016. We've taken preliminary steps to create an air shed management plan. Other Provincial areas have air shed management plans, but the Sunshine Coast does not. It's important to have baseline data before possible large industrial projects come to the Howe Sound/ Sunshine Coast region. The overall goal is to prevent degradation of our air quality due to industrial pollution.

We are working on an *Electric Car Pledge*, where individuals pledge that their next car will be an electric car. This campaign is in its initial stages. The goal is to decrease fossil fuel use & improve air quality.

We support the proposed *Enhanced Smoke Free Bylaw* that will come before the Gibsons and Sechelt Councils soon. Vancouver Coastal Health is leading the effort, and the SCCAS provides as much support as we can.

We continue working on banning backyard burning on the Coast. This past year we focused on Pender Harbour and will continue to do so in 2016. To date,

we've been successful in getting bylaws passed to ban back yard burning in Gibsons, District of Sechelt, Roberts

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Creek, and Half Moon Bay. With these successes, our air is cleaner and those with respiratory illnesses are helped.

As you can see, we've been awarded grants that have been essential. But grants usually do not provide for overhead costs. We don't charge dues because we don't want money to be a barrier to membership. At this time we do not have charitable status, but we accept donations. If you're so inclined, please mail a check to SCCAS, P.O. Box 396, Sechelt, B.C., V0N 3A0. All donations are gratefully accepted.

Priorities for the Sunshine Coast Clean Air Society

- *Decrease smoke pollution on the Coast*
- *Prevent degradation of our air quality by industrial development*
- *Support Climate Action—*
- *Communicate with Students and Seniors*
- *Collect baseline air quality data for a future air shed management plan*

Make the Electric Car Pledge for your Next Vehicle

by Ryan Logtenberg

The historical Paris summit last December resulted in a collective resolve among 197 countries to limit the planet's average global temperature increase to no more than 2°C to avoid a critical threshold above which the planet could experience irreversible catastrophic impacts.

To achieve this goal, governments, and more importantly individual citizens in these countries will each need to do their part to reduce their own carbon footprint in order to keep the temperature below 2°C.

Unfortunately, scientists are telling us that the planet doesn't have the luxury to wait for governments to "maybe" or "someday" mandate the lifestyle changes scientists believe need to happen. The time is now for people to wake up from their daily routines and take personal action by making the

necessary changes in their lifestyle and purchases that experts say must occur.

A transition away from a fossil fuel driven economy is one of those steps and thankfully individuals now have a choice to drastically reduce their own carbon footprint through a single decision of making the next car they buy an electric one. And that is where *The 2° Institute*, a newly formed subsidiary of the *Sunshine Coast Clean Air Society*, comes in.

With the anticipation of a new generation of 300 km+ range electric vehicles in 2017, in a price range comparable to mass produced gas vehicles, it will now be easier than ever for the average middle-class consumer to make the leap to the new paradigm of zero emission personal transportation.

To help individuals take this step, *The 2° Institute* will be asking people to make the Electric Car Pledge: that when they are ready

to shop for their next vehicle, that next vehicle they buy will be an electric one.

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The 2° Institute plans to offer an electric car buyers guide, an interactive map of public charging stations and an online form for individuals to take the pledge and receive an official certificate of their pledge that they can proudly share with their social networks.

The great thing about the electric car pledge is that it isn't forcing the consumer to go out and buy an electric car right away. They can make the pledge now and continue driving their existing vehicle until they are ready to upgrade to an electric one."

We can do our part to keep our planet from warming by 2 Degrees Celsius by the choices we make as consumers and to the lifestyles we choose to live.

Switching over to an electric car is one of those choices

Saying Good Bye to our Executive Director

Jools Andres has been our Executive Director since 2013 and is now leaving to pursue her dream of creating a yoga retreat centre and teaching yoga teachers. While working diligently for the Clean Air Society, she's gone through all the certification programs needed to create her own business.

As Executive Director and a talented writer, editor, and graphics artist, she expanded our Facebook page, created a Twitter account, and published our newsletter. She administered our Wood Stove Exchange Program (WSEP), sponsored by the Ministry of Environment and B.C. Lung Assn, which became one of the most successful WSEPs in the province. She wrote grants to fund our various activities including an educational Facebook ad campaign for residents on the Sunshine Coast, hosted a Symposium called Keep Our Air Safe which gave our Society direction

from the participants and included an excellent panel of experts. There were other grants Jools wrote which garnered us needed funds for our activities. We will certainly miss her competence and ability to advocate for us.

We wish you the best, Jools! Thank you!

Solar on my Roof

by Elizabeth McNeill

Twelve solar panels went on my roof the beginning of February fulfilling a dream I've had for about 25 years. I don't know the technicalities of solar energy, but I know that harnessing the power of the sun can provide non-polluting energy. And I know my hydro bill will come down.



With my 3 kWh system, I can sell back excess electricity to B.C. Hydro in the summer for 9.9 cents a kilowatt hour. Then I buy back in the winter.

I'm writing this in February - obviously not a peak generating month. On one sunny day, the system produced 6.91 kWh. On a cloudy and very rainy morning, with a sunny afternoon; the system generated 2.69 kWh. For all of February, with our variable weather, the system produced 109 kWh, and the carbon offset was 167 pounds, equal to two trees!

Solar panels add to the value of a home.
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It's estimated that I added a \$12,000 value to my home on the Sunshine Coast, which in itself almost paid for the system .

Because of the many benefits, homeowners' demand for solar panels keeps increasing. Solar capacity increased worldwide 53 times in nine years. Prices dropped 73% compared to prices in 2006. All this makes it increasingly feasible to go solar. And it's a selling point when you sell your home.

All levels of government need to support solar and other alternative energies more. Substantial rebates are needed. At this time the province, though it doesn't provide rebates, does not collect a PST on the purchase of a solar system. Let's encourage our elected officials to do more.

Why I support an Enhanced Smoke Free Bylaw.

by Nara Brenchley

I grew up with terrible asthma. A major trigger was, and still is, second-hand smoke and the residual odour that clings to smokers' clothing. I have had serious and severe reactions leading to extreme anxiety anytime I smelled smoke or saw someone with a lit cigarette. Needless to say, this had a huge hindrance on my social life and career prospects.

I was fortunate that limited anti-smoking laws were introduced when I was younger but they were never quite enough. I could dine out in a restaurant yet never completely let my guard down as there was nothing to stop someone from smoking by an open window or in a doorway. True, no one was smoking indoors, but at times it felt they may as well have been as a breeze knew no barriers.

Allowing smoking outside but not in never did make much sense to me as I could be affected across a soccer pitch. Already exhausted and wheezing from cycling up a

hill, meeting a smoker at the top was a nightmare.

Adults are fully entitled to make their own choices in regards to what they individually ingest. My problem when it comes to smoking is that one person's decision to do so has an impact on every single other person around them. They take away everyone else's right not to breathe in second hand smoke and that's just not fair.

I know for many, smoking is an addiction which they already feel ostracized for. This is a hurdle to overcome and why education is important with bringing in changes. Some smokers have been polite and apologetic when realizing the effect they have, others not so much. It takes manners on both sides which is difficult when you can't breathe!

Meeting with our MP

by Joe Harrison

Joe Harrison, Louis Legal and Elizabeth McNeill met with our MP, Pam Goldsmith-Jones. We sent her a fact sheet about the Clean Air Society before the meeting, so she would have knowledge of our Society.



Louis talked about air quality issues and that our goal is to create an air shed management strategy. She did not know that the Sunshine Coast does not have

such a strategy, as she's aware other jurisdictions do.

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Joe talked about creating a more integrated approach for air, water, and land planning. She understands decentralized, integrated planning for ecosystem management.

She also offered to find out, if possible, why we did not receive a grant from B.C. Clear, as this could help in our search for funding to create the Howe Sound/Sunshine Coast Regional AQ Strategy Plan.

All in all it was a good meeting.

Pacific NorthWest LNG Project

The Dogwood initiative reports that, as a result of the Pacific Northwest LNG Project, there will be:

- 5.28 million tons of CO2 pollution per year from the facility itself
- 6.5 to 8.7 million tons of CO2 from expanded fracking operations.

In total, that's equivalent to all the cars and trucks in B.C. (14 Mt). This one project would crank up B.C.'s emissions by 18 to 22 per cent

If these numbers are correct. we are totally opposed to the plan. If these numbers are skewed, there needs to be a comprehensive, independent study that

determines exactly what the impact will be. It's difficult to fathom that we are considering increasing our contribution to GHGs.

Industry often has the ability to find ways to significantly reduce the impact of their operations but often sacrifice all for the maximization of profit. If these corporations are not prepared to do whatever it takes to reduce the impact of their operations, they should not be allowed to operate.

Sensitive salmon habitats must be protected. Remember the days when salmon were abundant around the south coast. Let's not destroy what is still an amazing ecosystem that supports salmon.



**Do you enjoy creating newsletters?
Would you like to volunteer and help
with our twice yearly newsletter?
If yes, please contact Elizabeth at
em2elizabeth@gmail.com**

Directors of the Clean Air Society

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