



CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF ESQUIMALT

Municipal Hall, 1229 Esquimalt Road, Esquimalt, B.C. V9A 3P1
Website: www.esquimalt.ca Email: info@esquimalt.ca

Voice: (250) 414-7100
Fax: (250) 414-7111

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 30, 2017
TO: Mayor and Council
FROM: Casey Brant, Chair, Environmental Advisory Committee
SUBJECT: **Letter from Island Health – Re: Air Quality Related Health Concerns Due to Domestic Wood Burning and Backyard Burning**

At the October 26, 2017 meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee, the committee received a referral from Council pertaining to a letter from Island Health, Re: Air Quality Related Health Concerns Due to Domestic Wood Burning and Backyard Burning.

Council requested the committee explore alternate options and incentives to domestic wood burning to encourage Esquimalt residents of alternate heating opportunities.

The committee reviewed the letter from Island Health and provided the following general comments:

- Due to the Township's urban environment, it is more challenging and costly to acquire wood for burning compared to alternative heating sources.
- Air quality concerns around wood burning, while not as significant of an issue compared to other communities on Vancouver Island, is still a concern for Esquimalt residents.

The committee also provided the following comments on the four options suggested by Island Health to assist in lowering fine particulate matter emissions and improving air quality.

Option 1 – Update and/or Implement Air Quality Bylaws

- Implement municipal registration of wood burning devices.

Option 2 – Offer Incentive Programs That Support Alternative Heating Sources

- Township should consider incentives and programs to encourage the replacement of noncertified woodstoves with an alternative heating source or exchanging to a certified woodstove.
- Expand the Esquimalt "top-up" of \$150 for the Oil to Heat Pump Program to include noncertified woodstoves. This strategy will allow the Township to assess the popularity of the program before making an application to the Provincial Woodstove Exchange Program.

Option 3 – Social Marketing and Educational Campaigns

- Host a community bonfire day.
- Demonstrate a certified and efficient wood burning device at community events (Celebration of Lights, Farmers Market, Buccaneer Days, etc.). This may include partnering with a local supplier.
- Educate homeowners to increase awareness on the following issues:
 - Township Bylaws including the outright ban on backyard and open air burning without permit as well as what can and can't be burned.
 - New provincial Solid Fuel Burning Domestic Appliance Regulation
 - Proper procedure for burning wood to reduce smoldering
 - Regular maintenance of wood burning devices
 - Impact of wood burning devices on home insurance rates
- Include messaging around burning in conjunction with other air quality initiatives.
- Highlight burning and air quality concerns in community newsletter.

Option 4 – Implement Bylaw Restricting Backyard Burning

- An outright ban on all backyard and open air burning is already implemented within the Township.

Following the discussion, the committee made the following recommendation:

That the Township of Esquimalt support a social marketing and educational campaign to raise awareness about the impact of wood smoke on air quality and health as well as expand the existing oil to heat pump incentive program to include uncertified wood stove appliances to heat pump.

Respectfully submitted,



Casey Brant
Chair, Environmental Advisory Committee