

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cowichan Valley Regional District provides incentives for replacing old woodstoves

Duncan, BC – Residents of the Cowichan region could be eligible for a rebate of up to \$950 when replacing wood-burning stoves with more efficient home heating appliances.

In 2018, the Cowichan Valley was labelled a “Red Zone” community, meaning the region is exceeding the Canadian Ambient Air Quality Standards for fine particulate matter. These standards are set under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act to protect human health and safety. Red Zone communities have pollutant levels above the highest threshold, meaning residents are at the greatest risk of experiencing health problems aggravated by air pollution.

“Replacing smoky, old wood burning appliances is a win-win for our community’s health and safety,” said Ian Morrison, Chair of the Cowichan Valley Regional District. “This an opportunity for individual households to meaningfully contribute to improving local air quality, and we hope to see more residents taking advantage of this rebate program in 2019.”

This year even more types of wood-burning appliances qualify for rebates under the CVRD’s Woodstove Replacement Program, including EPA and CSA-certified appliances over five years old and wood burning inserts for open hearths. An example of a healthier and more efficient appliances are heat pumps, which do not emit particulate matter and do not burn fossil fuels. To help reduce the financial barrier for heat pumps, the CVRD rebate for purchasing and installing heat pumps has increased this year.

“In British Columbia, particulate matter is considered the air pollutant of greatest concern and one of the largest sources of particulate matter in BC is from residential wood burning” says Dr. Shannon Waters, Medical Health Officer for the Vancouver Island Health Authority. “Both short- and long-term exposure to particulate matter can lead to increased risk of heart and lung disease. Many of the same cancer-causing contaminants founds in tobacco smoke are also found in wood smoke. Children, elderly and those with pre-existing health conditions are the most vulnerable.”

The Woodstove Replacement Program has been offered by the CVRD in partnership with the BC Lung Association and Ministry of Environment for the past 10 years. Since 2009, more than 1000 residents have taken advantage of the rebates and replaced their old woodstoves. In addition to reducing outdoor air pollution, participating residents have noted reduced insurance costs, savings on home heating costs, less time spent on home heating and improved indoor air quality.

To learn more about this program visit cvrd.bc.ca/Woodstove or contact CVRD Engineering Services at 250.746.2530 or es@cvrd.bc.ca.

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