

The ZONE

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PAMZ NEWSLETTER

Communicating Information about the Parkland Airshed Management Zone Association "We Care for Our Air"

Alberta Airsheds Council Holds Inaugural Meeting

Following the 2005 CASA Airshed Zones Conference, the organizing committee developed three recommendations; the key one was that a meeting of all zones be held to discuss the possibility of a council of airsheds in Alberta.

On May 31, 2006, airshed zone managers from across the province met at the CASA office in Edmonton to determine the need for an airshed zone council in Alberta. Potential roles for an airshed zones council were discussed as were possible benefits for zones and others.

The group's next meeting will be held at the "Fixed On Nitrogen" Science Symposium in Lake Louise at the end of September (see upcoming events). At the second meeting the representatives will present the feedback they received from their respective organizations and explore further the next steps for the prospective council. Thanks to CASA for hosting the initial meeting and especially to Kerra Chomlak of the CASA secretariat who did a wonderful job facilitating the meeting.



Various Airshed Representatives in attendance at the inaugural Alberta Airsheds Council Meeting : L-R Carna MacEachern - WBEA, Lindsay Telfer - ACAS, Bob Scotten - WCAS, Lenore Harris - PAMZ, Allan Mumby - ACAS, Myra Moore - FAP, Gary Cross - PAS, Glynis Carling - LICA, Kevin Warren - PAMZ & PASZA, Lisa Strosher - CRAZ

PAMZ Partners in Mercury Monitoring Program



Technician Gary Eitzen at the Crossfield-Carstairs Monitoring Site

PAMZ recently entered into a partnership with the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) to operate a Mercury Wet Deposition Monitoring Station at PAMZ's Crossfield-Carstairs site. The project is one of a number of GSC Health & Environment and Energy programs that provide geoscientific knowledge for the assessment and management of health risks posed by metals in the environment. This project is headed up by three GSC scientists: Hamed Sanei (see member profile), Fari Goodarzi, & Peter Outridge.

The project's primary objective is to determine the atmospheric flux of mercury and other selected trace elements. The results will provide a better understanding of their atmospheric deposition and geochemical cycle in the environment.

The station commenced operations in June and is the third station currently active in Alberta; the other two stations are located in Fort Vermilion and Genesee. The GSC is providing the monitoring equipment, samples, and their analysis and reporting. PAMZ is responsible for changing out and shipping the samples to the laboratory and maintaining the monitoring equipment.

Bonavista "Cares For Our Air"

Bonavista Petroleum Ltd. acquired the Carstairs Gas Plant and gathering system from Devon Canada in 2003. The Carstairs Plant became the flagship for this small, but fast-paced oil and gas company. However this facility, while being of high stature to Bonavista, was starting to show its age. The plant was originally commissioned in 1960 and while it had been excellently maintained throughout its history, Bonavista knew there was room to improve its performance.

In looking for ways to make the plant more efficient and cost effective, the added benefit of reducing emissions into the environment made a plan for upgrading it even more appealing. Numerous changes and improvements have been made to plant processes including capturing gas that would otherwise have been flared and enhancing the performance of existing equipment. By just redirecting waste gas streams back into the process and recycling them, Bonavista has reduced the plant's total flared volumes by more than 50% from 2003 to 2005. This improvement in efficiency also resulted in a 30% reduction in the amount of greenhouse gases being released into the atmosphere.

We can all breathe just a little easier knowing that PAMZ member companies such as Bonavista truly do "care for our air".



Replacing an Exchanger at the Carstairs Gas Plant

Did you know?

- Mercury is a known toxic substance that is harmful to humans, especially pregnant women, infants and children.
- Mercury is a pollutant in the air emissions from mining and metal smelting, the burning of fossil fuels such as coal and gasoline, and natural sources such as volcanoes and the weathering of rocks.
- Once mercury enters the environment, it can circulate in and out of the atmosphere until it ends up in the bottoms of lakes and oceans.
- A portion of mercury is bioaccumulative and is magnified in the food chain e.g. fish; exposure of humans to mercury occurs almost exclusively through the consumption of fish.
- Human generated mercury emissions have tripled the mercury concentration in the air and oceans since 1900, the beginning of the industrial revolution.
- Overexposure to mercury can cause learning disabilities, impair kidney and immune functions and, in extreme cases, lead to loss of sight and hearing.
- While all scientists agree that mercury is toxic, they do not all agree on the amount of mercury that should be considered a human health hazard.

Rimbey Public Meeting

On the beautiful spring evening of May 9, the Parkland Airshed Management Zone held a public meeting in the Rimbey Community Centre. The purpose of the meeting was to solicit input from the public and generate recommendations for the PAMZ's Issues Response Group (IRG) on Issues and Locations for the Peregrine Portable Air Quality Monitoring (AQM) Station 2007.

Approximately 30 attendees participated in the Tees meeting with representation from all of PAMZ's four stakeholder groups: government, industry, non-government organizations and the public. The meeting started with presentations about PAMZ and its activities, the PAMZ Regional AQM Program and the role of the Pere-

grine AQM Station in that program. Following the presentations a round table brainstorming discussion was held that resulted in recommendations for possible locations for the station as well as the tabling of some general ideas and concerns on air quality issues within the PAMZ region.

The PAMZ IRG will finalize the recommendations at its summer meeting and table them at the PAMZ Board Meeting in September. Thanks to all who attended and specifically to Rhonda King of Alberta Environment who did a wonderful job as the meeting's facilitator.

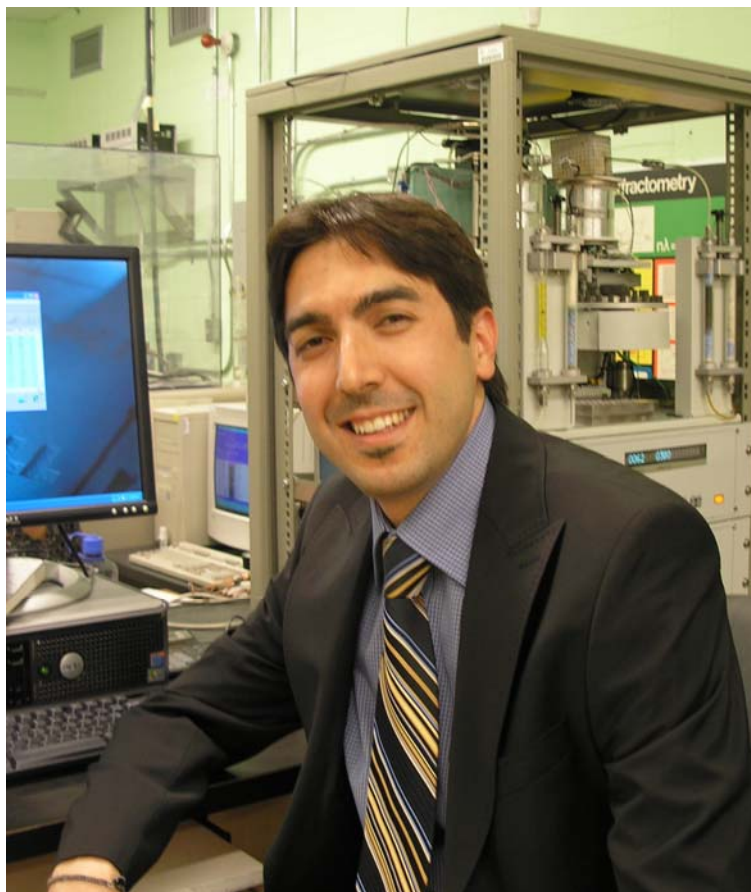
Member Profile - Hamed Sanei

Hamed Sanei is one of PAMZ's newest members, representing the Geological Survey of Canada (GSC) on the Technical Working Group since March. He is the GSC's liaison for the Mercury Wet Deposition Monitoring Project as reported earlier in this issue.

Hamed obtained his B.Sc in Geology in his native Iran and then immigrated to Canada in 1997; his parents and sister have recently joined him here. Since 1998 Hamed has worked for the GSC on various energy and environment related projects, which led to his Ph.D. through a joint project with the University of Victoria. He is currently pursuing a Post-Doctorate Fellowship.

When not working in a laboratory, the field or reading scientific journals, Hamed can usually be found engaged in one of his two other passions, music and photography. Hamed is an accomplished flamenco guitar player who also enjoys playing world music. You can hear some by visiting his friends' website www.bushwahbeat.com. Hamed's photographs have appeared in the Travel Section of the Calgary Herald demonstrating his proficiency as a photographer. He also enjoys hiking in the summer and skating during the winter.

Hamed sees his the GSC's partnership with PAMZ as an excellent vehicle for transferring the knowledge gained from the Mercury monitoring project directly to the public, industry and other government and non-government organizations dealing with health and the environment. He especially appreciates the uniqueness of the airshed approach specifically its consensus-decision making process and the wide range of its members' backgrounds and the diversity of the perspectives they bring to the table.



UPCOMING EVENTS

SPOG Neighbour's Day

September 13, 9:00–5:00 PM, Sundre Curling Rink

The Sundre Petroleum Operator's Group is hosting its 9th Annual Neighbour's Day promoting public awareness of oil and gas industry activities throughout the region. This year's theme is "Unity in the Community" with SPOG member companies teaming up with various community services in the area to raise awareness of each one's unique activities and demonstrate how we all get along. For more info call the SPOG office toll-free at 1-800-878-2306 or visit the SPOG website www.spog.ab.ca.

CASA Science Symposium on Nitrogen

September 27-29, Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, Lake Louise

"Fixed on Nitrogen" is a world-class symposium on one of the key environmental challenges in the 21st century - nitrogen. Experts from across North America and Europe will deliver the current science on the fate and effects of nitrogen releases to assist informed development of management strategies. Join the Clean Air Strategic Alliance as they increase understanding of the behaviour, effects and management of nitrogen emissions. For more info visit the CASA website www.casahome.org.

The Zone is published three times a year by the Parkland Airshed Management Zone Association (PAMZ), a non-profit society established to monitor and manage air quality issues in the Parkland Region of Alberta. For more information about the association visit our website or contact the PAMZ Executive Director, Kevin Warren.



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