

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 Peregrine 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.

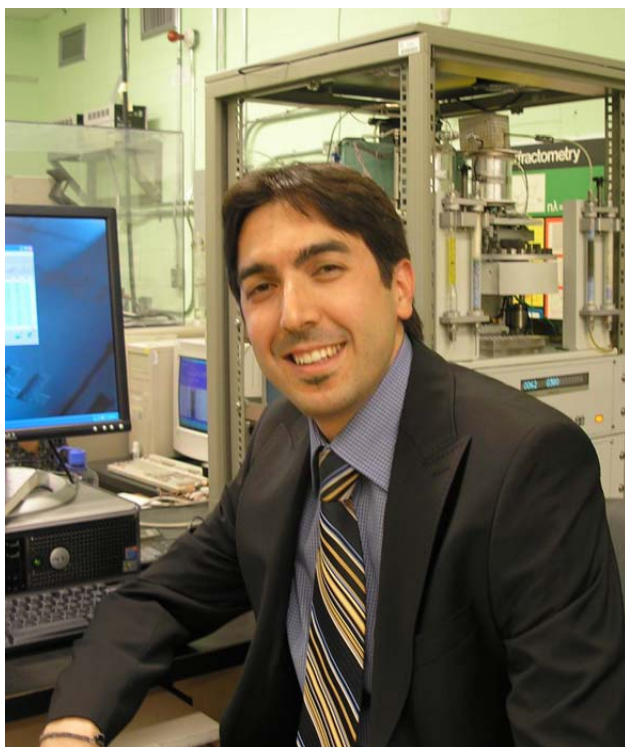
Member Profile - Hamed Sanei

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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