



The Northeast British Columbia Air Quality Monitoring Project Article 1 - Introduction

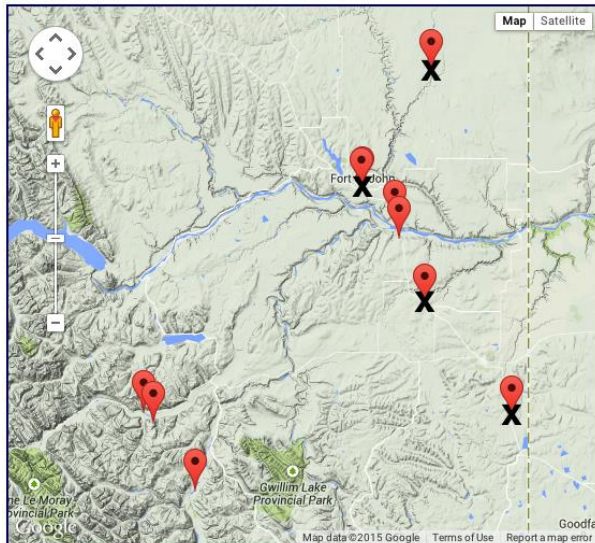
The Ministry of Environment, in collaboration with the Ministry of Natural Gas Development, Oil and Gas Commission, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers and Spectra Energy, has embarked on an ambient (outdoor) air quality monitoring initiative in the Peace River Regional District in northeastern B.C.

The project was developed in response to citizen concerns about air quality in the Peace, particularly as it relates to oil and gas industry expansion. It aims to help fill knowledge gaps and answer questions related to air quality and the oil and gas industry in the region.

The project is designed to measure, report and assess ambient air quality in northeastern B.C. and engage local residents and communities. Being implemented in three phases, the project began in June 2012 with the development of a stakeholder advisory group to provide advice on initial air monitor placement and more extensive monitoring in subsequent phases.

A major part of the project involves installing three new portable air quality monitoring stations, currently located at the Doig River Cultural Centre, Farmington Community Hall and Road 197 East in Tomslake. They measure sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and total reduced sulphur compounds (TRS). These pollutants are sometimes associated with “sour” oil or

gas activities which will be explained in subsequent articles. Since February 2015, a fourth station that is part of the regular provincial monitoring network has been operating at the Fort St. John Key Learning Centre. It measures pollutants needed by the national Air Quality Health Index, an hourly index designed to estimate health risk due to air pollution across Canada.



The map shows the locations of air monitoring stations operating in the Peace region. The X's identify the three portable stations and the Fort St. John Key Learning Centre station. The remaining sites shown on the map are

air quality monitoring stations operated by the oil and gas industry.

Real-time measurements from all stations are available on the ministry's BC Air Quality website at <http://www.bcairquality.ca/readings/northeast.html>. Historical air quality readings and data are also available.

The air quality monitoring project is now entering the final stages of Phase 2. Phase 3, set to begin in July 2015 will include the development of a long-term air monitoring network based on results so far.

Keep your eye on this section for articles about the project, such as air quality facts and results to date. A regular article will keep you updated on the status of air quality in your community.

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- More information on Northeast BC air quality, including current readings, is at <http://www.bcairquality.ca/readings/northeast.html>
 - For concerns related to oil and gas, please contact the OGC at 250-794-5200
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