

Public Health Advisory / Poor Air Quality

YELLOWKNIFE (June 28, 2006) – Dr. Andre Corriveau, the Chief Medical Health Officer, has issued a health advisory regarding the poor air quality caused by forest fires in northern Alberta, Wood Buffalo National Park and Saskatchewan.

The Office of the Chief Medical Health Officer has been advised by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (ENR) that smoke from forest fires south of the Northwest Territories are affecting air quality in the Yellowknife and Fort Smith region. As a result, the Fine Particulate Matter in the air has been elevated in the last few days.

Under these conditions, prolonged exposure to smoke may cause respiratory problems and high-risk groups are especially vulnerable to its effects. At-risk groups include infants and small children, pregnant women, the elderly and people of any age with lung or heart conditions, especially those with asthma, bronchitis and emphysema. Exposure to smoke can quickly result in eye irritation, tears, cough and runny nose. Dr. Corriveau advises that at-risk people should limit exposure to outdoor air and if they must go outside, to limit this time as much as possible.

To learn more about the effects of smoke exposure, please visit the Department of Health and Social Services' website at <http://www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca/> and click on the link titled [Air Quality - Forest Fire Smoke](#).

To learn more about the current forest fire situation in the NWT, please visit the ENR website at <http://forestmanagement.enr.gov.nt.ca/> and click on the link titled [Fire Management](#).

For More Information:

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