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PESTICIDE USER LICENCE TO BE REQUIRED

The application of pesticides on multi-residence properties will require a Pesticide User Licence beginning Jan. 7, 2007.

By requiring pesticide uses in multi-residence buildings to be performed under licence, the ministry is ensuring that pesticides are being used safely.

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LINKS:

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MESSAGE FROM ENVIRONMENT MINISTER BARRY PENNER

Last month was one of the wettest Novembers on record in British Columbia. Early in the month, rain and melting mountain snow caused many rivers to crest and spill over their banks. In the case of the Chilliwack River, flooding caused damage to some houses and about 300 people were forced to evacuate.

Work to repair the Wilson Road Dike on the Chilliwack River is now complete. The Fraser Valley Regional District is working to prepare a flood management plan to counter future flooding. However, people familiar with the area know the Chilliwack River is wild and will likely flood again.

Heavy rain also increased the volume of water flowing into the Capilano and Seymour reservoirs, creating high turbidity in the source of water for more than a million people in Vancouver, Burnaby and the North Shore. A boil-water advisory was issued for 15 days in this region and was lifted only after local health officials ensured the water was safe to use. This event demonstrates how prudent the B.C. Government's decision was to help fund a new \$600 million water filtration plant for the GVRD, which is now under construction and will be completed in 2008.

If record rains weren't enough to challenge British Columbians, the rapid arrival of winter weather did the trick. Roads were treacherous, thousands of people were stranded, schools were closed and snow-laden trees toppled on electrical lines, knocking out power in many areas. People in the southwestern part of the province aren't familiar with snow! And winter doesn't officially start until December 21.

Every minister in British Columbia, including myself, takes the health of all British Columbians very seriously. Through the Conver-

sation on Health (www.bconversationsonhealth.com), we want to hear what you think we can do to improve and renew our health-care system. People value good health, want healthy communities, and feel strongly that our health system must be there when needed. British Columbians can, and must, find ways of

making our health care system sustainable for the future. We face many challenges as our population ages and expensive new technologies are introduced. The discussion is open to all British Columbians. We need you involved.

We live in exciting times. The 2010 Winter Olympics and Paralympic Games are only three years away and British Columbians are getting in shape and making better choices about what they are eating. The B.C. Government is addressing our overall health with the ActNow BC program. Hiking is one of many fun ways to become healthier. I hike as often as I can in B.C.'s many spectacular parks, and I invite you to do the same.

I recently had the opportunity to join some school children at Gold-

stream Provincial Park who were there to witness the annual salmon run. The chum salmon migration was later than usual this year, due in part to low water levels in the river in September and October (it is good to see that river levels are now back to normal).

I joined the children as a naturalist demonstrated the dissection of a dead salmon that had already spawned, giving students a better understanding the physiology of fish and the life-and-death struggle that is part of the cycle of life.

And now, I want to take this opportunity to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas. I hope to see you in the New Year!



Environment Minister Barry Penner joined grade 3 students from Oakland Elementary School in Goldstream Provincial Park as BC Parks Naturalist Darren Copley dissects a dead salmon. The Minister and the students learned about the lifecycle of salmon from Darren and the interactive displays at Goldstream Park's interpretive centre.

VICTORIA/OTTAWA INVEST \$20 MILLION IN FRASER RIVER

A combined total of \$20 million from the federal and provincial governments has been invested in a collaborative effort designed to restore and maintain healthy and diverse salmon populations in the Fraser River watershed.

The Government of Canada will invest \$10 million and the Province of British Columbia will match the commitment.

Under its Fraser Basin Initiative, DFO will contribute \$5 million in cash and \$5 million in staff time, technical expertise and resources, to projects being carried out under the Fraser Salmon and Watersheds Program. This commitment will support innovative initiatives that address the underlying challenges to Fraser River salmon populations. Funding under the Fraser Basin Initiative will be directed toward four key areas:

- Improved science for decision making
- Stewardship and habitat
- Fisheries management
- Collaboration and relationship building

"We're dedicating \$10 million to the Fraser Basin initiative. Now the Federal Government is stepping in with a \$10-million commitment

earmarked for the Fraser Basin Initiative," said Barry Penner. "This combined total will go a long way towards ensuring our commitments to conservation and improving fish and wildlife habitat will be carried out on one of Canada's most important rivers."

In May of this year, Premier Gordon Campbell announced that the Living Rivers Trust Fund would be increased to \$21 million. [*More >>](#)



* To view the Environment Report online, go to www.env.gov.bc.ca/pac/envrep/

THOMPSON RIVER STEELHEAD SPORT FISHERY REOPENS

KAMLOOPS – The Thompson River steelhead sport fishery has reopened for the balance of the sport fishing season.

An in-season assessment of steelhead abundance indicated that the run size satisfied conservation requirements, so the catch-and-release only fishery will stay open until Dec. 31, 2006.

Environment Minister Barry Penner encourages all British Columbians to take advantage of the re-opened fishery.

Anglers must have a classified waters licence and a steelhead conservation stamp, in addition to a current freshwater sport fishing licence.

The fishery is located on the Thompson River between the fishing boundary signs near Kamloops Lake and the CNR bridge near Lytton.

For other regulations, consult the B.C. Freshwater Fishing Regulations Synopsis available from fishing licence vendors or check online at www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/fish/regulation/synopsis.html.

The Conservation Officer Service encourages the public to Report All Poachers and Polluters (RAPP) by calling the 24-hour hotline toll free at 1-877-952-7277 (RAPP), #7277 on the TELUS Mobility Network or by visiting RAPP website at: www.rapp.bc.ca.

PUBLIC SAFETY: TOP PRIORITY DURING FLOODING

British Columbians in the southwestern part of the province are being urged to take precautionary measures as the threat continues for stream and river flooding during current weather instability. In early November, the Fraser Valley Regional District declared a state of local emergency for the Chilliwack River Valley area. Two hundred homes were ordered evacuated.

A reception centre was set up in Chilliwack to help evacuees. Further east in the District of Hope, a state of local emergency was declared for the Othello Tunnels area due to debris blockage in the Coquihalla River, and 100 homes were placed on evacuation alert. Ten homes on Silver Creek were ordered evacuated early in the day. The District opened a reception centre to assist evacuees.

Further east, the District of Hope was declared a state of local emergency for the Othello Tunnels area, due to debris blockage in the Coquihalla River, and 100 homes were placed on evacuation alert. Ten homes on Silver Creek were ordered evacuated early in the day. The District opened a reception centre to assist evacuees.

There are a number of safety tips for the public during periods of heavy rain and high streamflows:

Avoid small creeks and rivers as their channels tend to be narrow and can fill up quickly.

Also, eroded banks result in unstable ground. Most importantly, keep children and pets away from stream banks.

Watch for changing conditions, particularly if you live in low-lying areas or near waterways.



Environment Minister Barry Penner discusses emergency response during recent Chilliwack Valley flooding that forced the evacuation of about 300 people.

Drive carefully. Never try to drive through floodwater. If a car stalls in floodwater, get out quickly and move to higher ground.

If you are planning to travel, follow current highway conditions and any road closures. Check Drive BC at www.drivebc.ca.

If rising waters become a threat to your safety, obey emergency officials who are involved in rescue or flood control operations, including those directing traffic.

Always follow the instructions of local emergency officials.

Emergency preparedness information can be found on the following website: www.pep.bc.ca.

Ensure that you have a battery-powered radio in working order (with spare batteries) to listen to instructions from local emergency officials.

It is a good idea to organize your individual and family emergency kit. It should contain important documents, prescription medication, a flashlight and first aid kit.

B.C. LAUNCHES WORLD'S FIRST AIR QUALITY HEALTH INDEX

In keeping with our government's focus on improving the health and awareness of British Columbians through initiatives like the Conversation on Health, B.C. is the first province in Canada to introduce a new Air Quality Health Index.

A pilot study for a new Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) that provides forecasts on air quality similar to the UV Index has been launched in eight communities throughout British Columbia.

"British Columbia's air quality is amongst the best in North America and we have seen some further improvements in recent years, which is important since air pollution is directly linked to increased health risks," said Penner. "The new index will be particularly useful to members of the population who are at higher risk due to lung or heart conditions, such as senior citizens and those with asthma."

The AQHI pilot is a partnership with Environment Canada, Health Canada and participating municipal governments. British Columbia is the first province in Canada to pilot the index. Public testing began in the fall of 2005 in four communities in the Thompson-Okanagan region. This pilot study is a successful expansion of last year's test and is accessible at www.airplaytoday.org.

"The quality of our environment, especially of the air we breathe, is a key priority of Canada's New Government. Over the coming months, my colleagues and I will start telling Canadians about a practical, results-oriented approach to protect their health," said federal Environment Minister Rona Ambrose. "It will deliver cleaner air, diminish traffic gridlock and further protect Canadian families from harmful substances." *More >>



Since August, Environment Minister Barry Penner and Minister Neufeld (Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources) have approved nearly 500 megawatts of green power projects, including wind power and run-of-river hydroelectric projects, similar to this one at Furry Creek south of Squamish, which was completed in 2004.

* To view the Environment Report online, go to www.env.gov.bc.ca/pac/envrep/

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