

Final Report for Yukon Burn It Smart Project

The Yukon Burn it Smart Project ran from September 2002 to March 2003. The project was to educate people about safe, efficient, healthy wood heating and to encourage people to upgrade their existing wood heating systems to wood stoves that meet current standards for low emissions. EPA stoves produce up to 90% less smoke and use up to 1/3 less wood.

The project delivered 24 public workshops throughout the Yukon. The project also involved training more people by WETT (Wood Energy Technical Training), operation of a burn demonstration trailer, and a media campaign.

The project had support and partnerships with the Energy Solutions Centre, Yukon Development Corporation, Yukon Environment, Yukon Public Safety, Yukon Housing Corporation, City of Whitehorse, Wood Energy Technicians of British Columbia, and Pacific Energy manufacturing.

Some workshops were held in conjunction with other initiatives of the Energy Solutions Center and Yukon Development Corporation. People were also shown how to determine if their appliances were energy efficient and a program to encourage Energy Star refrigerators was featured in conjunction with the wood heat workshops.

Please refer to the Mid term report (Dec 2002) for Yukon Burn it Smart for details on workshops held before January 1 2003.

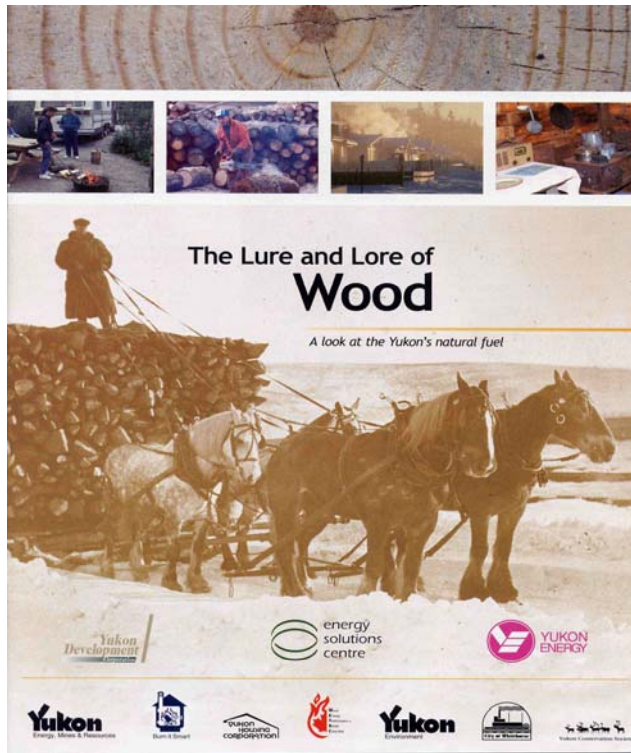
Yukon Fuel wood



Much of the firewood in the Yukon is standing dead. The trees are either killed by forest fires or spruce bark beetles. Usually if green wood is burned, it is intentional because people feel that it will burn longer. Burning green wood is common practice, however

many people who do burn green wood that came to workshops were reconsidering the practice.

Special points of interest



During the Burn it Smart project, the Yukon Energy Solutions group of companies commissioned the Lure and Lore of Wood publication. This publication as well as display panel material is a regular part of trade fair type displays. There have been many requests for this publication along with the Guide to Residential Wood Heating.

Additional requests for home inspections

The Burn it Smart project has a public profile for WETT training and doing public education on wood heat, as does the Energy Solutions Centre. As a result we get requests for home visits and wood stove inspections. These are dealt with by passing on the names of WETT certified people, giving out the wood heat books, giving dates and locations for upcoming workshops and speaking with the people individually. Of interest was one user of an EPA stove in a house trailer. From the description given by the user his stove was installed to code. However he had to clean the chimney every few weeks. Reasons for this were deduced as being poor burning practices and a chimney that was apparently too large in diameter for the unit.

Wood Heat Video

The Atlantic Wood Energy Technicians Association produced a video that was modified to be applicable for the Yukon. The video was distributed to the communities that took part in the Burn it Smart campaign. The video will be available for training sessions the communities do after the Burn it Smart campaign is over. Copies of the video are also available as prizes for other activities.

2003 Workshops Synopsis

January 23 Afternoon presentation Lower Post, Jan 23 evening presentation Watson Lake, January 23 School presentation all cancelled due to below -40°C temperatures. The workshop was advertized with posters, mailbox flyers and in the local newspaper's coming events section.

February 3 Afternoon presentation Old Crow



Fuel wood is hauled via snowmachine and sled in Old Crow. A sled load of wood has a market value of \$60.

The workshop held in Old Crow had 12 attendees composed mostly of technical people working in the housing sector. As a result of the workshop, the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation is interested in upgrading to EPA stoves.

In Old Crow, it is common practice to burn green wood in order to get fires to last for a longer time period. The results of such practices are shown to the right where a chimney is coated with creosote and ice. Green wood has a high moisture content which cools the fire and produces more smoke, but also has more moisture to condense when the flue gases cool as they leave the chimney.



Dawson City February 4

The workshop in Dawson City was delivered by an alternate presenter and the fire department due to unexpected delays in Craig Olsen leaving Old Crow. There were 7 attendees at the workshop, unfortunately no photo is available.

Atlin Workshop February 6



The Atlin workshop was organized through the firehall. People were informed via posters around town. (Note: some people were not clear what the Burn it Smart posters were portraying or what the workshop would be about.) There were 2 individuals that attended, both for ½ hour each as individual sessions.

Watson Lake Workshop Wye Lake Cabin February 7



The workshop at the Wye Lake Cabin was the second attempt at a workshop for the Watson Lake community. The first workshop was cancelled due to very cold weather. The second workshop was advertized on the radio and in the newspaper, but there were no attendees.

Carcross Fire Hall Workshop February 17 afternoon

The workshop for the Carcross community was organized through the fire chief and advertized by posters, radio and newspaper ads. Nobody from the community attended the workshop, but one very late comer went to the Tagish workshop ½ hr away instead.

Tagish Community Centre Workshop February 17 evening



The workshop was organized by the community centre. With the wonderful help of Chantal Duhaime, we were able to answer many burning questions outside the venue before the workshop and get the room set up in time to have the workshop. The workshop was advertized in

the local community newsletter, on the radio, and in the newspaper. There were 8 keen people in attendance, one who drove 1 hour from the City of Whitehorse because he has a recreational cabin in the area.



Beaver Creek Community Centre February 19 evening



The Beaver Creek workshop was held in the community hall and was attended by 6 people from the community. There are not many people burning wood in the community, but there was definitely an interest in Burning Smart. Part 2 of the workshop which featured appliance efficiency is shown in the picture

Burwash Community Centre Workshop February 20 evening



In Burwash we were fortunate enough to be able to speak at the Elders Council regular monthly meeting and had 8 community elders in attendance. There was much interest in

increasing the safety of homes by upgrading to EPA stoves.



Vanier Catholic School Whitehorse Workshop March 4 evening



This workshop was requested by the Riverdale Community Association (who participated in the pilot project workshops held in 2001/2002.) The workshop was advertised by flyers, posters, and newspaper. There were 5 people in attendance. Numerous students and parents attending a basketball game at the school saw the stove display and had the opportunity to ask questions while it was being set up.

Faro Campus Yukon College evening workshop



The Faro Campus of Yukon College requested a wood heat workshop after seeing the WETT course advertised in the newspaper. The event was advertised with posters and newspaper advertisements. The event was attended by 11 people.



Yukon College Ross River Campus morning workshop



A workshop was held in the Ross River Campus of Yukon College. There were 5 people in attendance. At the last minute the housing maintenance people were unable to attend.

Conclusion

Although the Burn it Smart message is important and was well received in the Yukon, workshops may not be the most successful or cost effective approach to delivering the message. The advertising was quite extensive, yet often people did not come to workshops, even when we know the advertising reached them (for example in Haines Junction, Watson Lake, Marsh lake, Bahai Institute) In other cases workshop attendance was usually very small. The reasons for this may be linked to the early focus group sessions where Yukon wood burners felt that they already knew everything. However, time and again at the workshops, people's minds changed and they realized there was a lot more that they needed to know. This tells us that the messages were good, but using workshops to communicate the messages was not very effective.

Most of our burners are not "recreational" burners. They are people serious about keeping warm and at the same time not spending a lot of money, while keeping things as simple and convenient as possible. The attitude is that burning wood is not very complicated so why would you need a workshop on how to do it?

Finally, attending a workshop is a bit 'threatening' to people. In order to attend, people need to first admit that they don't know something and that can be a difficult hurdle to overcome. It is also difficult for people with low literacy to attend workshops where much of the information presented is in written form.

Past experience in the Yukon has shown that a combination of public education initiatives and individual home visits work well to help motivate people to change their energy use habits. Successful public initiatives we have used include things such as

- creating displays with graphic explanatory panels for use at trade shows, home shows and the annual energy fair;
- producing magnetic fridge sticker checklists with practical tips and hints
- producing publications that play to people's interest in the Yukon, while "slipping" in appropriate messages
- publishing relevant articles in Yukon newspapers;
- by way of selected tours of residences, providing case studies for key people such as retailers, contractors, inspectors, housing authorities and others, focused on how best to improve the efficiency and environmental quality of heating systems;
- posting relevant material on the Energy Solutions Centre's web site <http://nrgsc.yk.ca/>; and
- doing mailbox drops in appropriate communities.

Our continuing individual home visits are building our knowledge on how best to communicate in the Yukon's diverse and wide-spread communities -- from the mixed cultures of the City of Whitehorse and our larger communities, to the varied and largely First Nations cultures of our smaller communities. The House Calls 2000 project, Riverdale Woodstove Education and Change-Out Pilot project, the First Nations Community Energy Management Service and the current Furnace Inspection Pilot project have given us the experience and contacts necessary to reach Yukoners in a meaningful way. By visiting a percentage of Yukon households, we intend to engender further conversation on energy topics within our communities and create enough awareness to promote a subsequent ongoing thirst for knowledge.