

Reaching Out

TRAIL
HEALTH &
ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE



Summer 2007

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TADANAC FAMILY RENOVATING “This Old House”

The Spence family of Tadanac is happy to report that most of their renovations are finally complete. They moved into their 70 year old home 2 years ago with a project ahead of them to improve the comfort and energy efficiency of their newly purchased home. The family moved to Trail from Alberta when Larry transferred to the AMEC Trail office. Their three children, Steven (14 years), Kurtis (12¹/₂ years), and Sydney (3¹/₂ years) now have an even more wonderful home to enjoy.

The Trail Health and Environment Committee would like to remind residents that if you are renovating a home in Trail, you should follow the guidelines outlined by the Work Project Assistance Program (W.P.A.P.). Dust generated during renovation, demolition, and excavation may be contaminated with lead and other metals. It is therefore important to protect workers from exposure to contaminated dust and prevent the dust from being blown or tracked outside the work zone. It is also important to protect children and

pregnant women, who may be living in or near the renovation area. If you are excavating, demolishing, or renovating in the Greater Trail area call Valerie and find out more information about W.P.A.P. at 364-6223.

That's what Roberta Spence did! She found out about the W.P.A.P. when her husband brought home a pamphlet from work at AMEC. Roberta received free



Sydney, Roberta, Larry, Kurtis, and Steven are happy with the renovations of their 70 year old home.

safety supplies (respirators with filter cartridges, coveralls, shoe covers, work gloves, masking tape, and plastic sheeting) and was provided with information about safely completing her renovation work. The renovation involved some very dirty and dusty work like removing and replacing the attic flooring and installing new insulation above ceilings and around hot water and heating systems.

As part of a study to investigate lead levels in renovation dust, Roberta collected a sample of dust from her attic which was sent for lead testing. Results revealed that the dust had a lead content of 15,300 ppm! Within 1 month of completing her renovation, Roberta started a job at Teck Cominco and had her blood

"This is a fabulous program and I would recommend anyone renovating their house to use the services and equipment supplied".

tested for lead. Roberta was thrilled to find out that after renovating her home and being exposed to dust with high lead levels, her blood lead was 3 ug/dL. (Average blood lead for an adult living in Trail and not exposed through work situations is about 1-3ug/dL).

So short and simple, the protective equipment worked and Roberta and her family remained healthy and well during their renovation! When Roberta was asked for a comment on the Work Project Assistance Program she replied "This is a fabulous program and I would recommend anyone renovating their house to use the services and equipment supplied".

FALL 2007 BLOOD LEAD TESTING

Why is Blood Lead Testing Important?

The Trail Lead Program has encouraged blood lead testing every year for children living in the Trail area. Lead is present in the emissions and dust from the smelter complex. The lead particles fall to the ground and contaminate yards and roads. This soil and dust gets tracked into our homes on shoes and clothes, and through windows and doors. Research has shown us that children under 5 years of age are most at risk for elevated blood lead levels. Typical childhood behaviors of putting dirty toys, fingers, and other objects in their mouths, cause children of this age group to be more at risk. In addition, children absorb up to 50% of the lead which enters their bodies (a much higher percentage than adults who only absorb 8-10%). The developing brain of a child before birth and in infancy is most at risk from the effects of lead exposure.

This fall, the Trail Lead Health Services would like to welcome Joy Pearson to our Blood Lead Clinics. Joy is a Lab Assistant with 20 years experience. She will be collecting the children's blood and preparing it for testing.

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Joy Pearson

Two Local Children are New Radio Voices

If you have been listening to KBS over the last few months you may have heard the voices of 7 year old Chloe Sirges and 8 year old Mateo Evenson, both residents of West Trail. These two young budding stars have been involved in the newly updated radio advertisements promoting healthy living in our smelter community. The children interact in playful conversations between Max and his older, more knowledgeable, sister. These ads present messages from the Trail Health and Environment Committee and are intended to catch the ear of families with young children - messages like hand-



Mateo and Chloe at KBS Radio Station.

washing after playing outside and before eating; eating a healthy diet; taking off your shoes at the door; playing in sandboxes with clean sand; and keeping bare areas in your yard to a minimum. All of these are activities that the Trail Lead Health Services encourages to keep children's blood lead levels low.

Home renovation in Trail, especially in homes that are close to the smelter, and any houses in Greater Trail built before 1975 (because of the use of leaded paint), should be done using personal protection like respirators, coveralls, gloves, and shoe

covers. Special care should also be taken to minimize dust from entering clean living spaces, and when doing renovations if children and pregnant women are living in the home. For more information about the Work Project Assistance Program (for residents doing renovation, excavation, or demolition) and to request free safety supplies call Valerie at the Trail Lead Health Services at 364-6223. Don't forget to listen to KBS Radio for Chloe and

Mateo with the healthy living messages in June, July, August and September!

These two young budding stars have been involved in the newly updated radio advertisements promoting healthy living in our smelter community.

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Why is Blood Lead Testing Important?

All families who have children from 6 months to 60 months (5th birthday) will be contacted by mail in July and August of this year. This letter will inform them about the blood lead testing and encourage them to call the Trail Health Unit if they have not heard from the Trail

Lead Program by September 2007. Any families with young children, who are new to Trail, are also encouraged to contact Valerie at 364-6223. The Trail Health and Environment Committee encourages all families to participate in this important health screening.

Human Health Risk Assessment Update Project

In the 1990s, the Trail Community Lead Task Force, as well as the BC Cancer Agency and the BC Center for Disease Control, looked at possible health risks related to other metals that are found in the mineral ores processed at Teck Cominco. The Task Force used metal concentrations in soil, dust, water, air and locally-grown food to estimate people's exposures to arsenic and cadmium. This assessment found a small calculated risk of adverse effects due to longterm exposures, but no short-term concerns. The Cancer Agency and CDC looked at rates of diseases in the local population (cancers and kidney disease) and found no measureable increases in rates of disease in this area.

In 2004, the BC Ministry of Environment reviewed the work done in the 1990s and recommended some additional sampling and analysis. This additional sampling and updated risk analysis are currently underway, with results expected to be available in 2008.

Ongoing Community Education Projects

- In 2005 the "Lead and your Family's Health" brochure was updated. The brochure is available through the Trail Health Unit, Dr's clinics, Kootenay Boundary Regional Hospital maternity ward, and is mailed to new parents.
- Annual newsletter mailed to every household in Trail.
- Radio advertisements throughout the spring and summer on topics such as: lead and nutrition, lead and home renovations, blood lead testing, and reducing lead in the home and yard.
- Storybook aimed at preschoolers is available to daycare providers through the Child Care Resource and Referral Program.
- Ongoing presentations to community groups such as Building Beautiful Babies and Child Care Resource and Referral Dropin Play Group.
- Work Project Assistance Program informational CD's available from the Trail Health Unit for homeowners doing renovation, excavation or demotion in Trail.



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