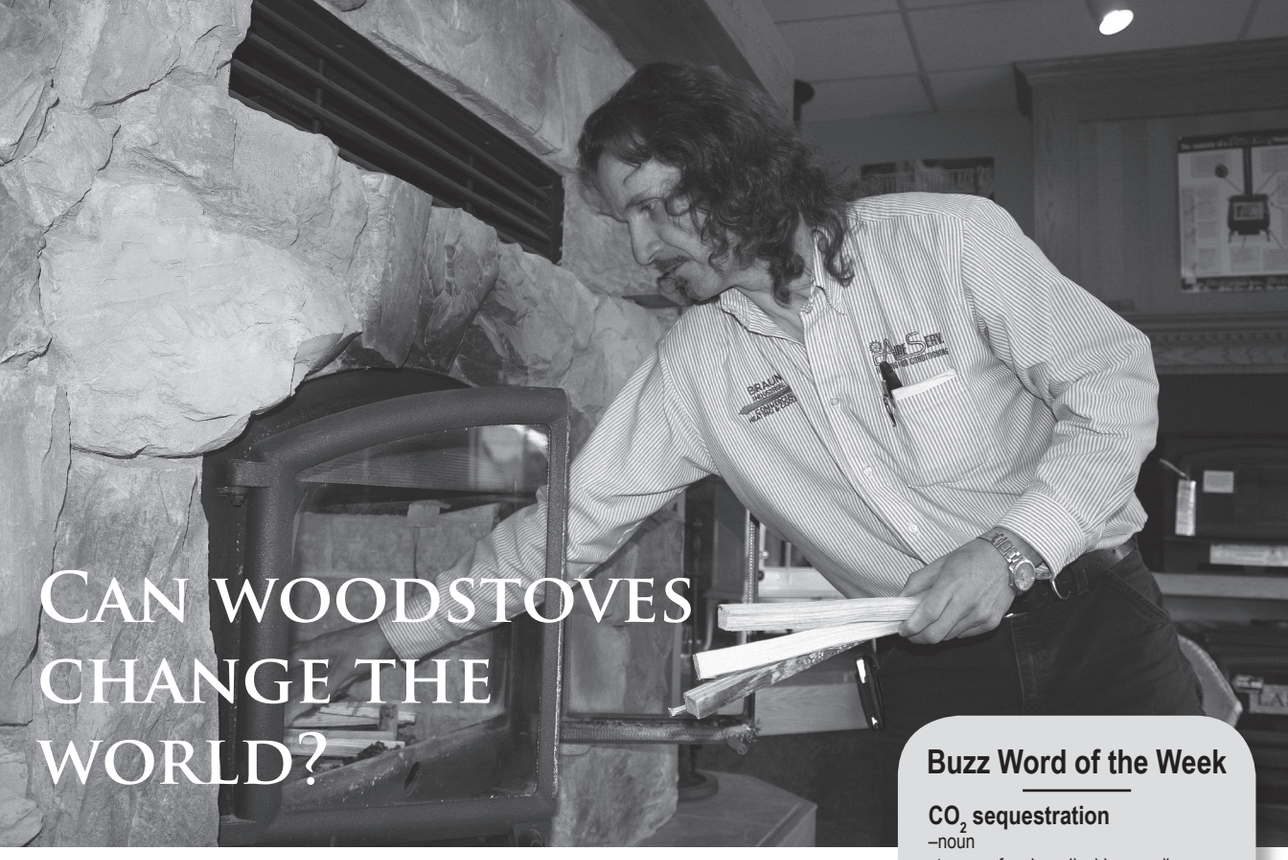

Can woodstoves change the world?

"The key is your whole attitude towards burning" explains Andre Fuellbrandt, Operations Manager at North Central Plumbing and Heating. To burn "clean" requires seasoned wood, a hot burning fire and, of course, an EPA high efficiency furnace or woodstove.

By Benoît Rivard,
Energy Programmer at One Sky
With files from Mike Simpson

Can woodstoves change the world? It's an interesting question. To truly understand this question, you need to think about carbon, the key greenhouse gas, and where it's coming from.

We burn carbon in both fossil fuels and natural fibres like wood but the difference is that the carbon from wood is a part of something called the biotic cycle. Essentially, carbon goes through a natural cycle in our biosphere during which it is stored in trees and organic matter and eventually released into the atmosphere through decomposition or fire. It is then re-absorbed by plants as they photosynthesize in a continuous cycle of carbon that self-regulates.

> "Trees are a renewable resource with a natural cycle of 120 years"

Burning wood in a high-efficiency woodstove or furnace releases carbon in a biotic carbon cycle that is limited to hundreds or thousands of years. Technically, if trees grow again this carbon is sequestered or captured from the atmosphere again.

Fossil fuels, on the other hand, are extracted from deep below the ground where they have been stored for sometimes millions of years. This cycle of carbon can take hundreds of millions of years yet we have accelerated this an enormous amount in just over 100 years of intense fossil fuel use. Releasing this non-biotic carbon into the atmosphere has been at the root of our climate change problem. When we burn gasoline, coal, natural gas or oil we are releasing enormous amounts of carbon that have essentially been locked up for millions of years into a biosphere that relies on a much shorter carbon cycle.

Of course, there are concerns about air quality. More and more people are switching to high-efficiency woodstoves and furnaces because smoke from burning wood that is not sufficiently dry is a major cause of incomplete combustion and particulate matter.

If you want to feel good about burning wood, consider burning wood from waste slash piles or other sources that would have released the carbon into the atmosphere anyway.

The bottom line is that fossil fuels like gas, oil and coal are limited natural resources that will eventually run out. Trees, on the other hand, are a renewable resource, which in our ecosystem have a natural cycle of 120 years. We should be reserving our remaining fossil fuels to make the critical transition into a world of renewable energy, like solar, wind and geothermal.

With that in mind, high-efficient woodstoves used properly, could actually change the world. Who would've thunk?

*By the way, the **Bulkley Valley Credit Union** offers prime interest loans for homeowners switching to a high-efficiency woodstove or furnace. Call them today to find out how you can apply.*

Buzz Word of the Week

CO_2 sequestration
–noun
storage of carbon dioxide, usually captured from the "atmosphere", in a solid material like coal and wood through biological or physical processes.

In The Neighbourhood

The BVLD Airshed Management Society offer **$250** rebates to anyone from Terrace to Burns Lake for replacing their old inefficient woodstoves.

If you live within the Smithers boundaries, the Town of Smithers will give you another **$500**. That's a total of **$750**, folks.

These rebates are first come, first serve, and they've already given out 300 of 400 rebates. **For more info, visit cleanairplan.ca**

25 pts

Installing a high-efficiency woodstove or furnace will earn you 25 points in the **Energetic Olympics** so sign up today!

ONE SKY

North Central Plumbing & Heating Ltd. welcome!

Energetic Olympics

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