

In 2001 HPBAC (then called the Hearth Products Association of Canada), under contract to Environment Canada, initiated the Georgian Bay Woodstove Changeout and Education Program, a pilot for what was to become the Burn it Smart program. Financial support was also provided by Natural Resources Canada and the Ontario Ministry of the Environment. Wood Energy Technology Transfer Inc. (WETT), the Wood Heat Organization, the Ontario Lung Association and woodstove manufacturers and retailers also provided assistance. Manufacturers and retailers contributed rebates on sales of stoves and advertisements.

The program was the first to incorporate a burn trailer, a seminar series (public and professional) and a changeout – all in one. Since that initial series there has been a total of 8 burn trailers put into service across the country, of which 5 are still in regular use. To better understand the motivations and stove use patterns of those attending the workshops, a participant survey was created – the initial response to that survey formed part of the project report to the client at that time. One of the questions asked in the participant survey was whether it would be okay if they were contacted at a later date - to their amazement, call is what we did, four years later – this time with funding provided by HPBAC and Environment Canada. Out of the over 300 attendees who volunteered their phone numbers, our staff, were able to randomly contact 135 who were willing to complete the phone survey. Once past their initial surprise, everyone was quite willing to discuss the workshop and the impact that it had on their wood burning habits. The full results are to be found in the body of the report but here are some of the key findings.

Key findings

- 73% said the workshops brought about positive change on how they burned wood
- 15% no longer burn wood.
- 34% have updated their wood burning appliance, with one switching to propane
- Of those who changed out their old wood burning appliances 90% chose an EPA appliances
- Another 13% still intend to replace their wood burning appliance
- 94% of these 17 respondents plan to replace their old appliance with an EPA-certified appliance
- Including those who have changed out appliances and those with the intention of doing so, approximately 41% of all the 135 surveyed will have changed out or intend to change out their old woodburning appliances for cleaner EPA technology
- 91% of those surveyed think we should be offer another workshop in their area, which means that offering another workshop in a area isn't a problem, in fact, it would be appreciated.

One can't help but be impressed by the results, which fully support our on-going commitment to Burn it Smart workshops and changeouts. Here is a copy of the questions asked during our survey followed by the results.

HPBAC / Environment Canada Wood Heat Workshop Follow-up Survey

You attended a wood heat workshop three years ago in _____ (location of the workshop as per their evaluation form) and indicated that we could contact you at a later date. If it is convenient, we would like to ask you a few follow-up questions?

1. After the workshop, do you feel your wood burning practices...
Improved
Stayed the same
2. Have you made any changes in how you burn wood?
Smaller, hotter fire
Less smoke from the chimney
Seasoned firewood
Improved firewood storage
Better system maintenance
Other _____
3. On the evaluation sheet you estimated that you burned _____ bush cords* of wood each winter.
Has that changed? Yes No
* a bush cord is 4' x 4' x 8', there are 3 face cords in a bush cord.
If so, how many cords of wood would you estimate you now burn each winter?
4. Have you updated or changed your wood burning appliance since the workshop in 2001?
Yes No

IF YES	IF NO
a. What type of fuel does your new appliance use? Gas Propane Wood Pellet Oil Electricity	a. Are you planning to change your appliance? Yes No b. Will you replace it with an EPA-certified advanced technology wood-burning appliance? Yes No
b. If wood, did you replace it with an EPA-certified, advanced technology appliance? Yes No	
c. If EPA, what messages would you pass on to others thinking of changing their appliance?	
5. Should we offer similar wood heating workshops in your area again?

Thank you for your time.

We learned many interesting things from the survey results that clearly indicate the positive impact that the workshops had on the participants. 73% of those surveyed reported they had improved their wood burning practices, only 27% felt their wood burning practices did not change.

When asked about the changes they have made in wood burning practices, participants responded as follows:

- 56% reported they burn smaller, hotter fires
- 56% reported they have less smoke coming from their chimney
- 75% reported they now burn only seasoned firewood
- 41% improved their firewood storage practices.

Twenty-one respondents no longer burn wood.

Of the 135 survey participants 46, or 34%, have since updated their wood burning appliance, with one switching to propane as a fuel. This is a very impressive number. Of the 43 who changed out their old appliances 39 chose EPA-certified appliances. Only four actually responded that they did not choose an EPA-certified appliance.

Another 17 of those surveyed, or 13%, are still planning to replace their current wood burning appliance with 16 of this number (or 94%) planning to replace their appliance with an EPA-certified one.

Overall the participants reported a reduction of 104 cords of wood burned per season since the workshops were held in 2001. 60 of the cords reported were accounted for by those who replaced their appliance, while 44 fewer cords were reported by participants who have not replaced their appliance. In most cases, participants who had not reported the number of cords consumed in 2001 were unable to determine whether they had reduced their firewood consumption.

Here are some of the more interesting responses to the question – “what messages would you pass on to others thinking of changing to an EPA appliance”

Don't buy cheap – saved approximately 33% by getting this new stove.

Use EPA system or better.

Expect to spend \$6000 to get a good appliance

Has a catalytic converter - burns less wood - cleaner.

Older fireplaces need to be checked for safety

Produces more heat less cost

Please refer to the Appendices A & B for additional reasons for selecting an EPA appliance and the messages participants would pass on to others regarding their EPA appliance.

Another significant result was the 91% or 123 of the survey participants who believe a similar workshop should be offered in their area again. This suggests that participants found the wood heat workshop very valuable and still see the need for wood burning education in their area.

Conclusions

Judging from the both the number of participants who changed out their wood burning appliance (34%) and the positive comments and interest in additional wood burning education, the Georgian Bay workshop series was very successful and has had a lasting and ongoing effect on the participants. A significant number have made changes in how they burn wood, and the wood they burn. The quantity of wood burned has been reduced significantly as well, both by those who've changed out old appliances and by those who are simply burning better. The objectives of reducing wood smoke and burning more efficiently appear to have been met for the participants in the 2001 Georgian Bay Region workshop series.

Appendices

A – Survey Results

B – Participants who replaced their old stove with a new wood burning appliance.

C – Participants who reduced consumption of wood but did not replace their appliance

D – Survey Comments