

# Press Release

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## **Sudbury Area Air Quality Monitoring – A Student Educational Initiative**

Students, teachers learn about air and the environment through Trillium-funded educational project

**Sudbury, ON, Friday, March 2, 2007:** On Friday afternoon, the Centre for Environmental Monitoring (CEM), MIRARCO, and Clean Air Sudbury celebrated some good news, thanks to a \$73,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). With the generous support of the Foundation, the groups have been able to undertake an educational project to introduce the concept of community air quality monitoring to secondary schools in the Greater Sudbury area. Trillium representative Nancy Craig was there to congratulate the groups as they worked with students and teachers at Lockerby Composite School.

Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Northern Development and Mines, voiced his support for this initiative through the following statement: "Ontarians are becoming increasingly aware of and concerned about the future health of the environment, including air quality" said Bartolucci. "Through hands-on education, this investment will help raise local student awareness of air quality issues and help devise plans to protect local air quality."

During this project, teachers and students will learn about all aspects of air quality research including monitoring, data gathering, statistical analyses and report production. This work will be supported by interactive educational modules, curriculum enhancements and classroom presentations by local air quality professionals. In the first phase of this project, modern air quality monitoring equipment will be set up at Lockerby Composite School and Confederation Secondary School for a

Community Monitors Air Quality in Sudbury Schoolyards period of one month. A second monitoring session will take place at two other secondary schools in the Greater Sudbury area later this spring.

Clean Air Sudbury Co-chair, Mr. Allan Douglas, describes the project as an opportunity for hands-on learning and mentoring. "Each school will have a class which will learn about the equipment, gather and process the data and formulate results in charts and graphs," stated Douglas. "Through this hands-on learning experience, students will gain sound research, critical thinking and communication skills as they use the analytical, meteorological and air sampling equipment on loan from the collaborating partners."

Centre for Environmental Monitoring Director, Dr. Graeme Spiers, is encouraged to see the partnership of industry and government in a unique initiative that applies environmental education to "real-world" experiences. "The students will learn how sampling equipment is used by professionals to measure air quality and ultimately link results to impacts on humans and the surrounding ecosystem," indicated Spiers. "Through their participation in the program, students will heighten their awareness of their role in the ecosystem, build a sense of community and develop stewardship for local ecosystems." It is anticipated that students will develop practical skills that can easily be transferred to their future workplace.

Rainbow District School Board Chair Dena Morrison commended the Centre for Environmental Monitoring (CEM), MIRARCO, Clean Air Sudbury and the Ontario Trillium Foundation for bringing this dynamic learning opportunity to local schools. "The air quality monitoring project will build on our efforts to encourage young people to adopt sound environmental practices at school, at home and in the community." She added: "This is another example of all sectors of the community joining together to support global thinking at a local level."

[www.mirarco.org](http://www.mirarco.org) [www.trilliumfoundation.org](http://www.trilliumfoundation.org)

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# Backgrounder

## **Centre for Environmental Monitoring (CEM), MIRARCO**

CEM provides innovative applied multidisciplinary research, monitoring and development services to aid resource industries in the solution of problems in ecosystem remediation, rehabilitation and restoration. The primary aim of Clean Air Sudbury is to further improve local air quality in Greater Sudbury, and also to educate on the processes necessary for the reduction of greenhouse gases. Clean Air Sudbury brings together stakeholders, engages the public in discussions, education and actions, and provides access to relevant air quality information.

## **MIRARCO**

MIRARCO is a not-for-profit R&D company owned by Laurentian University, specializing in the natural resources industry, energy and the environment. MIRARCO assists companies and municipalities of all sizes in solving problems through innovative applied research, using customized teams of scientists, engineers and University / College student researchers.

## **Clean Air Sudbury**

The primary aim of Clean Air Sudbury is to further improve local air quality in Greater Sudbury, and also to reduce greenhouse gases. Clean Air Sudbury will bring together stakeholders, engage the public in discussion, education and actions, and provide access to relevant air quality information.

The Clean Air Sudbury Advisory Committee is comprised of public and private sector stakeholders, including CVRD Inco, Xstrata Nickel, Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Laurentian University, City of Greater Sudbury/Earth Care, Sudbury District Health Unit, Northern Ontario School of Medicine, Science North, Cambrian College and Private Consultants.

## **Ontario Trillium Foundation**

The Ontario Trillium Foundation, an agency of the Ministry of Culture, receives \$100 million annually from Ontario's charity casino initiative. The Foundation allocates grants to eligible charitable and not-for-profit organizations in the arts and culture, environment, human and social services and sports and recreation sectors. For more information, please visit [www.trilliumfoundation.org](http://www.trilliumfoundation.org).