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Hello Paluwik!

Hello 2016!

I hope everyone had a safe and wonderful New Years and Christmas this January.

As we all know, this winter was another odd one. The National Weather Services says the midwinter season was significantly warmer than normal across all Alaska. Typically we have our coldest period of the year between December through the end of February. Dry grass being exposed on snowless grounds raise concerns about early wildfires all over Alaska. So please keep our community safe and be extra cautious.

Since ATCEM (the Alaska Tribal Conferences on Environmental training) and AFE (Alaska Forum on the Environment) we have noticed how much awareness is out there about Climate Change and what impacts it has on Alaska and our coastal communities. This newsletter we have decided to educate community members on what climate change is doing. We have the impacts on Alaska itself, impacts on the eco system, impacts on the ocean and coasts as well as some information on ocean acidification.

***Elder trash:**

If we have no scheduled activities for our program we will be picking up trash, it is not a guarantee that it will be done weekly. Please remember not to call the council or ask staff members about the pick up. If we do it that day and we see you, we will let you know. ~Quyana.

Environmental Health Committee:

Hello my fellow committee members!

We are scheduled to have a meeting on March 31st, at 1:00 pm in the community center. We hope you all can make it because we have a full agenda to cover since we have not yet been able to have a meeting. Thank you!



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January is Radon Month

What is Radon?

Radon is a cancer-causing radioactive gas. You can't see, smell or taste radon, but it could be present at a dangerous level in your home. The primary routes of potential human exposure are through inhalation and ingestion. Radon is a radioactive gas that comes from the natural decay of uranium found in most soils. It moves up through the ground to the air and enters your home through cracks and other holes in your foundation. Testing is the only way to know if you and your family is at risk.

Radon is the leading cause of lung cancer deaths among nonsmokers in America and claims the lives of about 21,000 Americans each year. The EPA and the U.S. Surgeon General urge all Americans to protect their health by testing their homes, schools and other buildings for radon.

Climate Change and Alaska

Alaska is home to 229 federally recognized tribes that have already been experiencing the impacts of climate change. The increase of the warming temperature is more than twice the warning seen in the rest of the United States. Warming winters have increased by an average of 6 Degree Fahrenheit and has led to changes in the ecosystems, such as early breakup of ice in the spring. Precipitation in Alaska is projected to increase during all seasons by the end of the century. Despite increased precipitation, the state is likely to become drier due to greater evaporation caused by the warming temperature and longer growing seasons.

Impacts on the ocean and coasts: Warming temperatures mean the decline of perennial sea ice. Perennial sea ice is the sea ice that forms year to year and gets bigger and thicker as it piles up against the Artic Shoreline. Other sea ice is seasonal, melting during the summer and refreezing in winter. In September 2012, the sea ice had the lowest extent on record, 49 % below the 1979-2000 average for that month. In September 2014, sea ice extent was nearly 700,000 sq. miles less than the historical 1979-2000 average for that month, a difference more than twice the size of Texas. The thickness and age of the sea ice is also declining throughout the Arctic, with recent measurements indicating a loss of 50% of sea ice since 1979. Models show that the sea ice will decrease and the Arctic could be nearly free of ice by the late 2030's. The loss of ice in the Arctic can result in habitat loss and a pathway for invasive species that tag along with the ships. This will also affect the timing and location of plankton blooms, which can affect the areas where commercial fisheries can thrive. The ice along the shoreline and permafrost in coastal areas help to protect human settlements from flooding and erosion. As coast erosion increases due to declining sea ice, residents are becoming more vulnerable.

Permafrost: The warming of the weather can lead to more permafrost thaw and disruptions to the freeze-thaw cycles that can increase frost heaves and subsidence. This can affect Alaska railroads, highways and airstrips. As permafrost thaws, ice in the permafrost melts and can cause the soil above the sink, resulting in ground subsidence and damaged roads, homes, schools and other structures. This also impacts the economy and could have widespread implications for Alaskans.



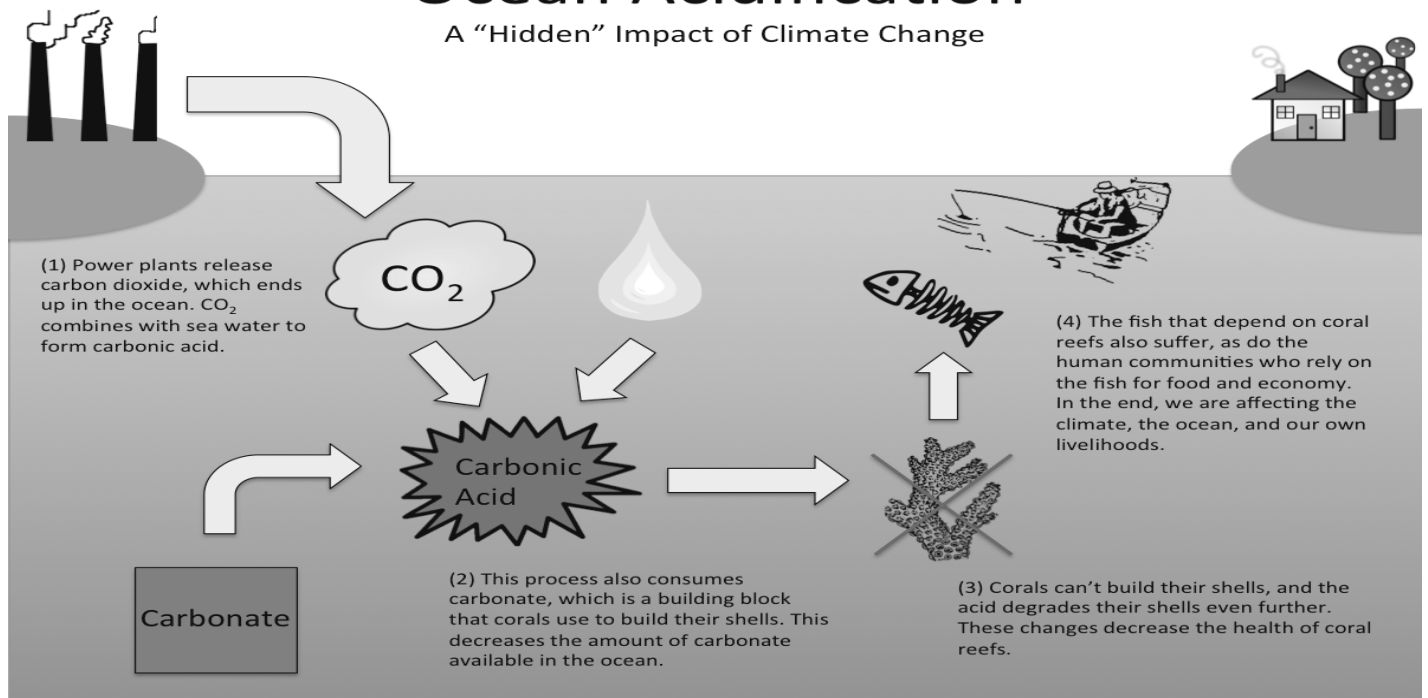
Impacts on Ecosystems:

Climate change is causing changes in lakes, ponds, plant composition, and wildfires that impact human health, wildlife, and ecosystems. Lakes get smaller through a combination of increased evaporation caused by warmer temperatures, permafrost thaw which allow lakes to drain more readily, and greater accumulation of decomposing plant material on lake bottoms caused by greater plant growth. Some lakes are growing in area because of lateral permafrost thaw, which causes the edges of the lake to collapse inward, therefore increasing the area of the lake. Higher temperatures and drier conditions call for the increase risks of drought, wildfire, and insect infestation. Fires change habitat, improving conditions for moose and some plants, but reducing the lichen that caribou rely on in winter. Warming temperatures are expected to worsen the insect damage to forests across much of the state, which may increase the area of standing dead, highly flammable trees that are vulnerable to wildfires.

Ocean Acidification: This is different from climate change, but related to it because both are caused by CO₂. The ocean is the earth’s largest carbon reservoir, containing more than 50 times as much CO₂ as the atmosphere. As more man-made CO₂ has entered the atmosphere, more of the gas has entered the ocean. The uptake of excess CO₂ comes at a high cost. In a chemical reaction, CO₂ dissolves in the ocean, raising the level of acidity. Ocean acidification is particularly damaging to the many organisms that use calcium carbonate to build protective shells. Collectively called “calcifying organisms,” they include some phytoplankton, and many invertebrates such as corals, sponges, marine worms, mollusks, and crustaceans. Increased acidity makes it harder for them to form shells, which will cause further negative changes in many marine ecosystems as the decline of calcifying species affects other species that depend on them for food. So climate change does not directly cause acidification of the oceans, rather climate change and ocean acidification are two separate and serious problems that are related because both are caused by excessive emissions of carbon dioxide.

Ocean Acidification

A “Hidden” Impact of Climate Change



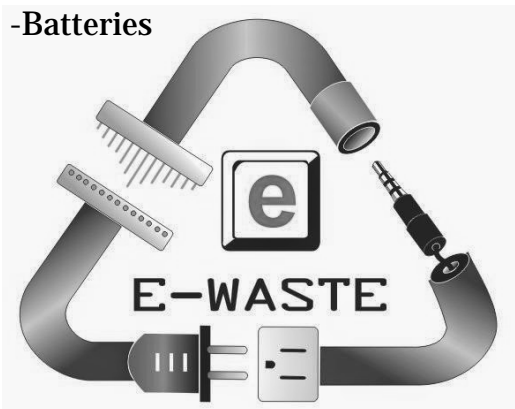
Electronic Waste Recycling Event!

We will be conducting another electronic waste recycling event for our community. We will have flyers dispersed around town as a reminder. We are going to coordinate with Seldovia and Nanwalek to get our E-waste sent away by April 8th.

We will be hiring a technician to help pick up used/broken electronics that are no longer wanted. Here is a list of acceptable E-waste:

We can recycle:

- Computers/Monitors/Laptops
- Printers
- Servers
- Televisions
- VCR/DVD players
- Stereos and audio components
- Cameras
- iPhones/iTouch/iPad
- Copiers/scanners/fax machines
- Cell/home telephones
- Electronic scales
- Credit Card machines
- PDA's
- Alarm clocks/clock radios
- Handheld games
- Communications equipment
- Batteries



Drop off location: In front of Safety Building (VPSO) labeled E-WASTE

Also at the dump near the used oils we have totes. (see picture below)



Port Graham Village has teamed up with Nanwalek and Seldovia to remove our e-waste so that it doesn't end up in our dumps.

***Sorry– We cannot take audio and videotapes, exit signs, PCBs, smoke detectors or vacuums.**

If something is too big to remove, call us and we will send our E-waste technician out to help you!

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“Funding for this publication was made possible by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Indian General Assistance Program (IGAP).”



Preserving the Village character, maintaining Village control, provide opportunities to enhance the quality of life in the Village, and to protect the environment and subsistence based culture.



spring CLEANING

www.simplykierste.com

checklist

kitchen

- clean out fridge & freezer
- clean oven
- remove & clean stove burners & knobs
- clean out & wipe down drawers & cupboards
- discard old spices
- mop floor & baseboards on hands & knees
- wipe down top of fridge
- clean behind fridge, if possible

bedrooms

- wash all bedding, including mattress pads, bedskirts, and comforters
- replace or wash pillows
- go through closets, switch out seasonal clothing
- rotate & flip mattresses, if necessary

laundry room

- clean behind washer & dryer
- remove front lint plate and clean thoroughly

general

- dust ceiling fans
- dust ceilings and corners of walls
- dust/clean vents & fans
- clean blinds
- wash windows, inside & out
- vacuum out windowsills, rinse screens
- dust/clean all light fixtures
- wash walls & baseboards
- vacuum or wash draperies & curtains
- wash or beat rugs
- wash down doors & light switch plates
- clean/shampoo carpets
- change air filter
- safety inspection: smoke & carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers
- vacuum out couches & chairs
- vacuum/use lint roller on lamps
- vacuum out sliding glass door tracks
- clean out medicine cabinets, safely discard old prescriptions