



# Port Graham Environmental News

Port Graham Village Council

## Native Population at Higher Risk of Illness or Death from Flu

### Influenza is now widespread in 47 states including Alaska

Vaccination rates are lower among American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) than in the general population, yet AI/ANs are more likely to get seriously ill from the flu, and die at a rate 1.5 to four times that of other races and ethnicities, Amy Groom of the Indian Health Service (IHS) said. Here are the steps Native people need to take during flu season.

It's especially critical to get vaccinated each year to protect yourself, and those around you. Everyone six months of age and older needs the flu vaccine, especially those at high risk and those who can spread the virus to vulnerable populations, such as health care workers, and caregivers of children ages six months and younger. Other populations at highest risk of influenza complications are children less than five years of age, and especially those less than two years of age, adults 65 years and older, pregnant women and those with chronic conditions such as

diabetes, heart disease, and asthma. This year's seasonal flu vaccine protects against both the influenza A strain H3N2 as well as the main circulating influenza B strain, and against the influenza A H1N1 strain that caused so much disease in 2009, Groom said. In addition to flu vaccine, the elderly and those with chronic health conditions should ask their clinic for the pneumonia vaccine if they haven't received that.

### The CDC recommends:

Steps you can take to [protect yourself from getting the flu](#). Wash your hands often with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub. Avoid touching: your eyes, nose, or mouth. Try to avoid close contact with sick people. Get plenty of sleep, manage your stress, drink plenty of fluids, and eat healthy foods. Cover your cough. If you

get sick stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone without the use of fever-reducing medicine.

The [CDC recommends](#) antiviral treatment as early as possible for patients with confirmed or suspected influenza who have severe, complicated, or progressive illness; who require hospitalization; or

who are at greater risk for serious influenza-related complications.

Flu-like symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people also may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, and have respiratory symptoms without a fever.

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### Special points of interest:

*Environmental Health Committee Members:*

*Harrietta McGhan*

*Stella Meganack*

*Jennie Kamluck*

*Lydia McMullen*

*Melinda Kamluck*

*Dannielle Malchoff*

### Next Meeting Date:

**February 19th at 1:00PM at the Community Center**

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## New Environmental Technician:

Camai Paluwik,

I am happy to announce I am working as the Environmental Technician. For those of you who don't know me; my name is Rita Meganack, born and raised here in the Village of Port Graham. I am very happy to be starting a new year with a new job! I hope to focus on continuing the village effort on: Recycling, Village Clean Up, Working/Updating with the Port Graham School, and keeping you informed and up to date with things we

need to be doing to keep our village eco-friendly! My office is located at the Village council, feel free to come by and visit or ask any questions you have, Violet and I will do our best to help out. Don't have time to stop in no problem; I can be reached by calling me at the Council Office 284-2227ext-28. Thanks again!  
Rita Meganack



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## Environmental Planner: Violet Yeaton

Camai Paluwik,

Happy belated New Years to you all!! I hope for good health and happiness for each and every one of you for the New Year. As for the Environmental Program, we are hoping for a very productive year. We recently hired a new Environmental Technician, Rita Meganack. I am looking forward to working with Rita. She is very interested in working with the school in getting the kids involved in recycling, building their awareness on recycling and environmental issues. Please help me welcome Rita to her new position.

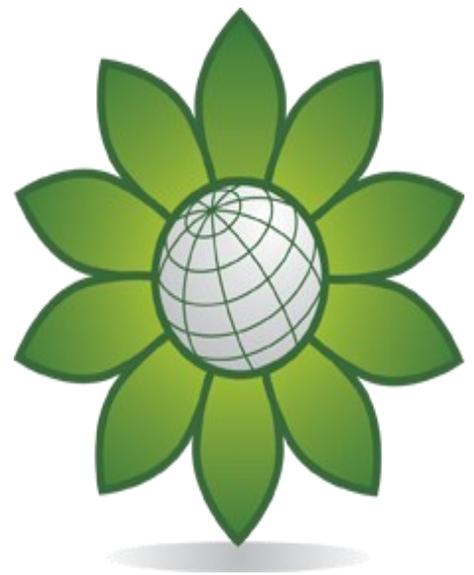
We have a very busy year projected for the Environmental Program. We will continue our recycling events, such as the electronic recycling event. We plan on partnering with Cook Inlet Keeper in this event to remove electronic waste of the dump. We have recycling tote (clearly marked Electronics Recycled here) located between the two trailers at the dump site. People are still continuing to dump their old TV's and computers at the inert

waste pile. So please recycle your electronics in the designated area. The recycling event for the electronics will be in April. We plan on having a tote located at the VPSO building for your convenience when we start that event.

Next month Rita and I will be attending the statewide Alaska Forum on the Environment conference February 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> in Anchorage. The Alaska Forum, Inc. was initially formed as an organization to support an annual educational event. This widely recognized event began in 1990 as the Alaska Federal Facility Environmental Roundtable as an annual conference focused on contaminants, hazardous waste cleanup, hazardous materials management, pollution prevention, etc. at federal facilities. It was expanded by an agreement, called the Statement of Cooperation, with the leadership of environmental regulators, military departments, and federal agencies. This year's conference agenda covered topics are, from Climate Change to Wind Energy to Marine Debris, just to name a few. We will give

a full update at the February 19<sup>th</sup> Local Environmental Health Committee meetings

If you have specific concerns, recommendations for the Environmental Program, we will phone calls, emails or stop in our offices to share that information. Qu yana





## Go Green: Reduce waste during the holidays

Thousands of paper and plastic shopping bags end up in landfills every year. Tell store clerks you don't need a bag for small or oversized purchases. Approximately 33 million live Christmas trees are sold in North America every year. Find more ideas for [reducing holiday waste](#), and

how to [reduce waste from parties](#). **Branching out?** After the holidays, look for ways to recycle or reuse your tree instead of sending it to a landfill. Check with your community solid waste department and find out if they collect and mulch trees. [Tree recycling](#)



The Alaska Forum on the Environment will be held in Anchorage, Alaska on February 4-8, 2013. This is a landmark event as we celebrate our 15th year! Keynote Events, over 80 technical breakout sessions, new features, contests and special amenities. Expanded content on Alaska coastal issues which will include marine debris concerns and impacts resulting from the Japan 2011 tsunami event.

## Indoor Air Quality: Improving Indoor Air Quality

**Why care about Indoor Air?** The air inside your home is often more seriously polluted than outside air. People who may spend up 90% of their time indoors, the risks to health can also be greater from poor indoor air quality than from outside air. **Why In Alaska Indoor air is of concern?** In cold climates, people tend to spend even more time indoors and in homes and buildings made air tight to save heat and keep out the cold, without fresh air and adequate ventilation, indoor pollutants and humidity can rise to unhealthy levels.

**What Causes Indoor Air to become unhealthy?** 1) Burning oil, gas, kerosene, coal, and wood products. 2) Smoking cigarettes and other tobacco products indoors. 3) Wet or damp carpet and moisture buildup within the walls and attics that leads to mold growth. 4) Diesel an other petroleum fuel products and equipment. 5) Aromatic products for household cleaning and maintenance, personal car, or hobbies. **What can you do?** 1) Maintain and use your home's ventilation system to bring in fresh air to replace damp or pol-

luted air. 2) Use bathe and kitchen fans to eliminate excess moisture and toxic fumes. 3) When you weatherize for energy-efficiency, ensure that there is still adequate ventilation. **Cleaning without toxic chemicals:** Clean regularly to reduce asthma triggers, dust, toxins, animal dander and mites. Use green cleaning agents rather than toxic chemicals.

**To get additional information, :** [General indoor air quality info. http://www.epa.gov/iaq/is-imprv.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/is-imprv.html) [Household cleaning and personal care: http://www.epa.gov/iaq/voc.html](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/voc.html) [Mold: http://www.epa.gov/mold/](http://www.epa.gov/mold/) [Ra- don: http://www.epa.gov/randon](http://www.epa.gov/randon)

**Port Graham Environmental Program**

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**Kids Winter**

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SLEET  
SLEIGH  
SNOW

