



James Bay air quality shows measured improvement since 2011
BC Lung Association report underscores important reduction in sulphur dioxide

July 6, 2017, Victoria, BC – Since the Greater Victoria Harbour Authority started measuring air quality in the James Bay community in 2011, levels of sulphur dioxide have steadily declined. This year, as reported in the annual *BC Lung Association State of the Air Report*, SO₂ is at a record low.

As one of 55 monitoring stations across the province, James Bay had the fifth highest recorded SO₂ levels in BC in 2015. In 2016 the community had dropped to 29th highest in the province, a remarkable year-over-year achievement. Throughout 2016, the highest recorded level of SO₂ from the James Bay station was 16 parts per billion. The sulphur dioxide guidelines promoted by Vancouver Island Health Authority describe “good” levels between 0 and 35 ppb.

“This is great news, not only for the residents of James Bay, but for the city,” says Victoria mayor Lisa Helps. “It’s proof that community partners, working together, can improve quality of life in very real ways.”

In 2011, GVHA funded a monitoring station in the community that would be managed and reported by the BC Ministry of Environment and VIHA, in part due to community concern over the health effects of emissions from cruise ships berthed at Ogden Point cruise terminal annually from April to October. The six years of measurement showed the result of marked decrease in sulphur-heavy fuel used by the cruise industry on approach and departure from ports (as regulated by the International Maritime Organization). The James Bay station tests and registers SO₂ levels every hour, and reports them online.

“There’s still work to do, but these results are excellent,” says Al-Nashir Charania, environmental projects coordinator for GVHA. “They came about through direct action not only by the shipping industry, but also by a very engaged community in James Bay, and they speak directly to the commitment of our partners to regulating, improving, and monitoring air quality.”

GVHA has committed to funding the James Bay air quality monitoring station through 2019, with the possibility of ongoing financial support into the future.

[BC Lung Association State of the Air report.](#)
[Vancouver Island Health Authority James Bay Sulphur Dioxide Monitoring Program.](#)

About Greater Victoria Harbour Authority

Greater Victoria Harbour Authority (GVHA) is a not-for-profit organization governed by a local Board of Directors. It owns and operates deep water, marina and upland holdings throughout Victoria’s harbour including the large vessel Ogden Point port facility where a dynamic cruise tourism industry contributes

over \$130 million annually to the regional economy; the Fisherman's Wharf float home community and small business hub; and the Inner Harbour's luxury yacht and marine tourism facility at Ship Point.

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