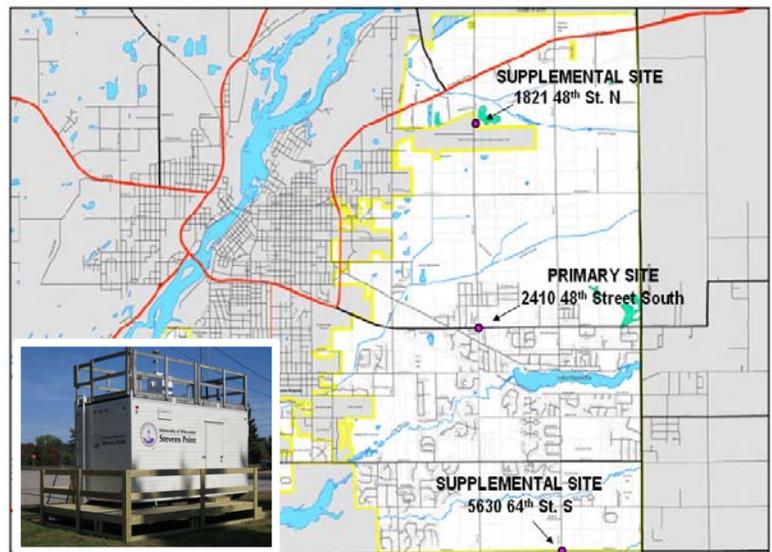


Grand Rapids Wood Smoke Study

This winter, the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point (UW-SP) is conducting a wood smoke study in Grand Rapids, Wisconsin. This research study is intended to provide information on winter-time air quality levels in the community, and to understand the role of wood smoke in affecting local air quality. Project partners include the Lake Michigan Air Directors Consortium, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Wisconsin Department of Health Services, the Wood County Health Department, the University of Wisconsin – Extension, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Grand Rapids Town Board.

Wood is a popular source of energy for home heating across the upper Midwest. For example, a recent wood burning survey in Minnesota showed that 30 percent of all households in that state burned fuel wood, with about 13 percent overall using it as the primary heat source. The effect of wood smoke from residential wood heating on local air quality is not well understood.

During winter 2011-2012, air monitoring will take place at three sites in Grand Rapids (see map at right). Each site will have equipment to measure the amount of fine particles in the air. The primary site, which is located at the Town Hall, will have a trailer (see insert) with other instruments to collect additional data to help assess wood smoke impacts. UW-SP students will also drive a vehicle equipped with an air quality monitor on several nights during the winter to provide a better understanding of air quality throughout the community.



The study findings will be shared with the Town Board and the community on a regular basis. Initial monitoring data will be presented to the Town Board in early 2012, and the full study results will be presented to the community at a special meeting in spring/summer 2012. A final project report is expected by fall 2012. Depending on the study results and the interests of the community, a second winter season of sampling (2012-2013) may be conducted.

If the research indicates that wood smoke is adversely affecting local air quality, then information on the benefits of cleaner wood burning practices and appliances (e.g., cost savings, increased energy efficiency, and reduced air emissions) will also be discussed with the community.

Contact for the study is Dr. David Snyder, UW-SP: (715)-346-2155.

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