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**OILPATCH ODOURS IN NORTHWESTERN ALBERTA STILL PUNGENT, YEARS AFTER INQUIRY**

'I felt tingling through my jaw. My eyes were itchy and runny.' Researcher Tristan Jones was cruising the back roads of northwestern Alberta last summer when his studies suddenly became more than academic. "It was kind of like we hit a wall of odour," said Jones, who's writing a PhD thesis at Rutgers University on how the energy industry has changed the environmental and social landscape near Peace River. "It was heavy. It was really strong," he said. "It was kind of like a mix of fresh asphalt, sulphur and who knows what else." I felt tingling through my jaw. My eyes were itchy and runny. I got a headache. I felt a little dizzy. "The exposure lasted about 10 minutes; the effects a couple of hours." "The tingling in my jaw was bizarre," he recalled. "I have no doubt that was because of the exposure to the odours." This wasn't supposed to happen any more. In 2014, the Alberta Energy Regulator held an inquiry into

odours from heavy oil operations in the Peace River area after years of complaints from residents in tiny communities such as Three Creeks. Hours of expert testimony and reams of reports followed. The inquiry concluded the powerful, gassy stench emitted by operators was damaging people's health. It released a string of recommendations, all of which were accepted by Alberta's energy regulator and provincial government. More than two years later, some recommendations are in place. But seven key ones — including everything the province was supposed to have done — are still in draft form, under study or in limbo. While locals say things have improved, they say the smells are still there. "It seems to me that every government, every industry, when they meet, all they've done is meet their mandate to say, 'We're talking with people,'" said Donna Daum, a retired teacher who has lived in the area for 14 years. "That's all it does. 'We're listening and we've heard what they have to say,' whether they do anything with it at all." The inquiry directed Alberta Environment

to bring in a legal odour standard. The department is working on it. "It's still early days," said Dave Lyder, the department's senior air modelling standards engineer. "Odour's complex." Odour is by far and away the most common complaint in any jurisdiction — between 70 and 90 per cent. "Three different departments — Environment, Agriculture and Health — are involved. So is the energy regulator. Any standard, Lyder said, has to work for both industry and the restaurant down the street. What chemical do you actually measure? How are problems reported? How do you set a threshold, and how is it monitored?" If we can provide a framework where we can manage odour across the province in a consistent manner, that's the No. 1 goal. Lyder acknowledges no such framework is in sight yet. The story is similar at Alberta Health, which was to study links between odours and health, as well as supply doctors in the Peace River area with information to help their patients. Karen Grimsrud, Alberta's chief medical health officer, said the province, together with the Alberta Medical Association, expects

to give Peace River doctors clinical practice guidelines for environmental health problems early next year. The guidelines will tell doctors what to ask, what to look for and who to contact for further advice. Consultations with residents take time, Grimsrud said. "They have to have confidence (that) if they have concerns about their health and they follow up with a physician, it's going to be followed up in a certain way." As for research, after 32 months Alberta Health is almost ready to begin a review of previous research. No field studies are planned. Grimsrud said that's what people in the community wanted. "It's very important to have a common understanding up front, so that takes a considerable amount of time." Lyder and Grimsrud acknowledge events such as the Fort McMurray wildfire have also delayed the work. The Alberta Energy Regulator says 12 of 16 recommendations directed its way have been implemented. New rules for practices such as flaring and venting gas are in place and being followed. Tighter restrictions on fugitive emissions, greater controls on flaring during "upsets" and an



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overall approach to development of Peace River heavy oils aren't in place. Agency spokeswoman Carrie Rosa said those directives have been awaiting government approval since January. Other holes exist. While airborne hydrocarbons are being measured, there is no target level for them. Air monitoring stations have been installed, but they don't immediately alert officials when there's a problem. And while odour complaints have fallen off, Daum said that's because people have given up calling the regulator. "We get nothing of consequence back except a letter to say we've checked out the odours and we've found nothing. They won't even tell me if they go out any more. It's going to be an interesting dissertation, said ones. "Clearly, there's a long way to go in terms of resolving these issues. I see industry is making some efforts, but ... progress since the inquiry has not happened at the pace it should." Daum points out that members of the current NDP government — including Premier Rachel Notley — were loud in their support when they

were in opposition. "(Notley) talked about the precautionary principle, which obviously is no longer in their dictionary. I can't believe how these dictionaries get rewritten the moment there's some responsibility attached to things."

### TRUMP CAMPAIGN GURU KELLYANNE CONWAY TO TOUR ALBERTA OILSANDS AND MEET BUSINESS LEADERS

Key Trump team insider will speak at dinner hosted by Alberta Prosperity Fund in January. The woman who managed Donald Trump's successful U.S. presidential campaign is coming to Alberta to tour the oilsands and speak to Calgary business leaders just days before his inauguration. Kellyanne Conway will visit Fort McMurray on an oilsands tour and then speak at a fundraising dinner in Calgary for the Alberta Prosperity Fund, a conservative advocacy group. "Ms. Conway is a very influential member of U.S. president-elect Donald Trump's transition team and someone that I personally admire as a woman in politics," Heather Forsyth of the Alberta Prosperity Fund said in a release. "Her visit to Alberta at this time should send a strong signal to Canadians on the importance of this province to the United States," says the release, noting that Conway is president and CEO of the polling company [www.womentrend.com](http://www.womentrend.com).

Trump's win earlier this month has renewed hope among some in the oilpatch that the controversial



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Keystone XL pipeline, rejected by the Obama administration, will be approved after all. Trump has said he is in favour of the 1,900-kilometre pipeline, and invited TransCanada to reapply for approval as part of his platform. Conway was invited to make the visit and will be paid an undisclosed sum for her speech. Conway's visit "should stand as a call to action for all Alberta industry," said Alberta Prosperity Fund president Barry McNamar in a release. "I hope that Ms. Conway receives an enthusiastic welcome here in Alberta and can return to the U.S. with an informed attitude towards Canadian export products." The Alberta Prosperity Fund said in July that it would throw its support behind Jason Kenney for the leadership of the PC Party, prior to his official entry into the race.

### 'RULE OF LAW' WILL PREVENT VIOLENCE ON PIPELINE ROUTES, SAYS NATURAL RESOURCES MINISTER

"If people determine ... that's not the path they want to follow, then we live under the rule of law". Pipeline companies are worried over the safety of their workers in face of potentially violent protests, Canada's natural resources minister was told Thursday in Edmonton. "I'm concerned about the safety and care of those individuals and the communities they're going to be working in," Paul de Jong, president of the Progressive Contractors Association of Canada, told Jim Carr at a meeting with business leaders.

De Jong said his organization represents construction companies from across Canada that might employ workers on the newly-approved Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion from Alberta to Burnaby, B.C., and the replacement of Enbridge's Line 3 pipeline from Alberta to Wisconsin. Opponents have since vowed to delay or kill the projects by any means possible. Carr explained while it's important protesters have the opportunity to peacefully express their opposition, the government will ensure workers are safe. "If people determine for their own reasons that that's not the path they want to follow, then we live under the rule of law," he said to applause. "He said the word 'rule of law' which I think is critical," de Jong said later. "Obviously this is a complicated matter, and the government has correctly no place in taking away the right of Canadians to object. But rule of law is critical, and the minister's response was critical."

After the meeting, Carr explained his remarks were not intended as a threat or warning.

"Hardly," he said. But he added, "If someone says, 'What happens if they break the law?' then the answer is, 'If anybody breaks the law they will be dealt with the same as any person by law enforcement officials.'"

### NOTLEY'S LEADERSHIP, CLIMATE PLAN, A FACTOR IN PIPELINE APPROVALS, PM SAYS

'Long, dark night' turns into 'some morning light': Notley. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau cited Premier Rachel



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Notley's actions on climate change for his cabinet's decision to approve the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline. "Let me say this definitively, we could not have approved this project without the leadership of Premier Notley and Alberta's climate leadership plan," Trudeau told reporters in Ottawa Tuesday while announcing the go-ahead of the pipeline. "A plan that commits to pricing carbon and capping oilsands emissions at 100 megatonnes per year." The \$6.8-billion Trans Mountain pipeline will take oil from Edmonton to a terminal in Burnaby, B.C., where the product can be shipped to world markets. The project is expected to create 15,000 jobs.

Notley was in Ottawa to meet with the prime minister immediately following the pipeline announcement. Afterwards, she praised his

"extraordinary" leadership in approving a pipeline that will improve a provincial economy that continues to reel from the drop in oil prices. "It has been a long, dark night for the people of Alberta as a result," she said. "Today, we are finally seeing some morning light. We're getting a chance to break our land lock. We're getting a chance to sell to China and other new markets at better prices."

Alberta is implementing a \$20-per-tonne carbon tax on Jan. 1, 2017 that will increase to \$30 per tonne in 2018. Notley said Alberta initially was tepid towards the federal plan to phase in a \$50-per-tonne carbon tax by 2022 unless Ottawa approved a pipeline that could help get oil to Asian markets. "Now I believe we are well positioned to work together with the rest of Canadians to make Canada an environmental leader,



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while at the same time protecting the jobs of so many people who rely on them to feed their families and put roofs over their heads," she said. In a news release, Kinder Morgan said it will now start seeking permits with construction planned to start in September 2017. The company hopes to have the project online by the end of 2019. The pipeline will run through the traditional territory of the Tsleil-Waututh First Nation, who vow to step up their fight against the project. Trudeau also gave the green light to the Enbridge Line 3 project that will carry oil from Hardisty, Alta., to Wisconsin. But he rejected the controversial Northern Gateway pipeline. Alberta Official Opposition Wildrose Leader Brian Jean said he was excited Kinder Morgan and Line 3 were going ahead. But he slammed Trudeau for not approving

Northern Gateway. "The NEB (National Energy Board) did approve that pipeline some years ago, and I think the rejection of the science on that by the prime minister over what our independent, arm's-length body decided is not a good decision for Canadians, and especially not good for Albertans," Jean said.

Jean dismissed Trudeau's assertion that Notley and the climate plan played a big role in getting the project approved. "I reject the idea that we have to trade pipelines for some form of social licence," he said. "The NEB, which obviously made the decision based on science, made these decisions some time ago." While Jean said he hoped Kinder Morgan would be built, he expressed concern that Notley has appointed pipeline opponents to the province's oilsands advisory group.

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