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U of A anti-idling policies not going anywhere—student

TOM WAGNER
News Staff

Vehicle idling is usually seen by environmentalists as needless CO₂ emission or, for penny-pinchers, a waste of gas. But if City Council gets its way, idling could soon be a hit on your wallet as well.

The City is currently examining whether or not to enact a bylaw against excessive idling. People shouldn't worry about Council going overboard though, said Ward 5 Councillor Don Iveson.

"We simply want people to ask themselves, 'Am I behaving reasonably or excessively?'" Iveson said. "A bylaw gives weight to that."

The bylaw couldn't come soon enough for University of Alberta student and HUB resident Kent Cameron, who recently presented his concerns about idling to City Council. He first became deeply involved in the issue when he noticed car exhaust entering his HUB apartment because of unaware drivers idling beside the air intake fans, which are supposed to supply his apartment with fresh air.

"I've actually smelled car exhaust in my apartment, which is served by those air [intake fans]," Cameron said. "I've had to block my air vent with a block of wood and get all my air from the window."



SAMBROOKS

PLEASE SEE IDLING • PAGE 3 **SHUT ME OFF** The U of A encourages motorists to turn off their engines while waiting around campus, and a proposed city bylaw may make this mandatory.

Int'l rankings place Alberta post-doc programs in top ten

YAW AMOAKO-TUFFOUR
News Writer

According to a recent survey by *The Scientist* magazine, the University of Alberta is among the top ten international institutions to work as a post-doctorate in the health sciences.

The selection was based on the U of A's network infrastructure and the opportunities available for their post-docs in the health sciences. The magazine discovered a consistent trend in these top-ten institutions to listen to the concerns of post-docs regarding career opportunities and in striking a work-life balance.

The U of A ranked seventh in the magazine's sixth annual Best Places to Work for Post-doc survey. Other Canadian institutions included in the top ten were the University of Toronto in tenth place, UBC in eighth, and Dalhousie in fifth.

Dr Marek Michalak, Chair of the Biochemistry Department, explained that traditionally, post-doctorates were a misunderstood and virtually unrepresented group on campus.

"Compared to graduate students, post-docs had almost no representation or organized structure," he said, describing the historical vulnerability of the post-doctorate community.

"During my studies, a post-doc could be terminated within two weeks of the program

with no explanation. When post-doctorate fellows came from overseas to attend North American universities, there was no security for them in the case that their placement did not work out."

Michalak believes the U of A was named one of the best international institutions for post-docs due to a combination of two factors: the University's establishment of a Post-Doctoral Fellows' Office, which in turn introduced a high level of organization and provided the post-doctorates with more leverage and equity within their departments.

"It was the Post Doctoral Fellows' Office that established standards for the post-doctoral program such as the lengths and methods of training. [The Office] was also the cause for contracts being introduced to provide some level of protection to new post-docs," he said.

Michalak also stated that the influence of the Post-Doctoral Office outside of academics enhances the post-doctoral experience, as it is able to assist with housing, funding, and health coverage.

In addition to the vital role of the Post-Doctoral Fellows Office, Michalak stressed the primacy of a high-quality faculty to the U of A's success. Describing the university system as a very competitive venture, he stressed the need to remain competitive in recruiting the top pro-



CYRIL BALITBIT

POST-DOCS TOPS Dr Marek Michalak discusses the prosperity of the U of A's post-doctorates.

fessors, allowing them to grow and to have the ability to retain them when they become the best.

"If other universities don't want to steal my professors, then there is something wrong with my professors," he said.

Michalak said his is a high-calibre faculty with many networks throughout the country and

internationally. These networks, he continued, provide both research and employment opportunities to post-docs that they may not receive elsewhere.

"Quality professors attract the top talent to complete post-doctoral studies at the U of A, and then these top post-doctorates in turn assist the professors to excel in their duties."

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Cirquetastic workshop

The wizards behind Cirque du Soleil stopped by campus to pass their dark secrets on to the technical students

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Badgeriffic finish

There's a new CIS basketball champion, while the Golden Bears bow out early to Carleton in Ottawa

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