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April 22, 2009

Brent Kreelman  
Managing Editor  
*Xtra! West*  
#501 – 1033 Davie St  
Vancouver BC V6E 1M7  
email: XWeditor@xtra.ca

Dear Brent:

**SUBJECT: Tobacco Advertisements in *Xtra! West***

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of B.C. & Yukon and the BC Lung Association, which make up the Clean Air Coalition of B.C., want to bring to your attention our concerns regarding tobacco ads appearing in *Xtra! West*.

*Xtra! West* may be unaware that the tobacco industry has a history of targeting groups and marginalized populations, including the GLBT community. In the 1990s, RJ Reynolds did a research study called Project SCUM, (Sub-Culture Urban Marketing) in an effort to market cigarettes to gays and the homeless in San Francisco. Philip Morris even went so far as to try and turn the Marlboro Man into a gay icon in order to attract more gay smokers.

Today, there are very few ways for the tobacco industry to advertise and promote their products in Canada. However, a loophole exists in federal tobacco control legislation that permits advertising in magazines with over 85% adult readership. So, the tobacco industry exploits this loophole by targeting magazines willing to accept their dirty money.

Does *Xtra! West* want to be known as a company that takes money from an industry that refers to its community as SCUM, or knowingly promotes products that when used as intended will lead to the death of half of its users? By printing these ads, *Xtra! West* is helping to normalize a product in the GLBT community where smoking rates are already higher than the rest of the population.

We strongly encourage you to consider stop running these ads.

Sincerely,

Jack Boomer  
Director, Clean Air Coalition of B.C.  
www.cleanaircoalitionbc.com