

briefing note



Date: June 30, 2014

To: Members, Board of Health

From: Franz Hartmann, Executive Director

Re: HL32.2 Strategies to Prevent Heat-Related Illness and Deaths from Extreme Heat Emergencies

We request the Board of Health to adopt the following additional recommendations:

1. In order to reduce heat-related illnesses and deaths, request the MOH to work with the appropriate city officials to fast track implementing the following actions:
 - a. Expand the urban tree canopy, increase green infrastructure, and expand pedestrian and bike networks to reduce the urban heat island effect;
 - b. increase energy conservation measures, incentivize developing renewable power generation in all buildings to support building a resilient distributed energy system to reduce the impact of brown-outs and black-outs.

2. Request the MOH to develop and implement a comprehensive health-focused “extreme heat prevention and preparation” public education campaign that focuses on preventative actions Torontonians can take to reduce extreme heat illnesses and deaths. The public education campaign should include:
 - a. outreach and engagement of vulnerable populations in multi-residential buildings,
 - b. community forums and partnership engagement with NGOs and community groups;
 - c. education activities that target the general public using media, social media, and the public education system.

3. Request the MOH to work with the Province of Ontario to:
 - a. develop coordinated and harmonized provincial extreme heat and cold alert systems and response plans
 - b. provide appropriate resources required to maximize prevention of, and preparation for public health emergencies that will come from heat-related illnesses and deaths due to severe heat caused by climate change

For more information, please contact: Franz Hartmann at 416-606-8881