



**July 7, 2025**

Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, Ontario  
M5H 2N2

**HL26.5 - Planning for Climate Change Monitoring to Understand Health Impacts and Support Resilience in Toronto**

Dear Members of the Board of Health,

**Toronto Environmental Alliance is writing to support Toronto Public Health’s surveillance framework to assess climate change-related health impacts, and strongly recommend a greater emphasis on the monitoring of indoor and causal impacts of climate change-related health issues.**

Toronto Environmental Alliance is pleased to see progress on the implementation of important climate change-related health monitoring measures. In particular, we are pleased to see that Toronto Public Health is implementing protocols to measure heat-related hospitalizations and heat-related mortality, which is a recommendation of the Toronto Heat Safety Coalition.<sup>1</sup>

However, we are concerned that the current framework deemphasizes the monitoring of both indoor impacts, as well as many of the causal factors associated with hospitalization and mortality from extreme heat.

As such, Toronto Environmental Alliance recommends the following:

- (a) **That the indoor climate-related health impacts be explicitly measured**, including (but not necessarily limited to) indoor heat, indoor air quality from fossil fuel combustion, and indoor air quality during wildfire smoke events.

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<sup>1</sup> See the demands and the backgrounder of the Toronto Heat Safety Coalition here:  
[https://assets.nationbuilder.com/toenviro/pages/4296/attachments/original/1717518024/press\\_release\\_w\\_demands\\_and\\_backgrounder.pdf?1717518024](https://assets.nationbuilder.com/toenviro/pages/4296/attachments/original/1717518024/press_release_w_demands_and_backgrounder.pdf?1717518024)

We note that at the November 2023 meeting of the Board of Health and the subsequent meeting of City Council, the following motion was passed (emphasis ours):

"Consider both the outdoor and **indoor** contexts of areas of impact, such as air quality, extreme heat, extreme cold and others as outlined in Attachment 2 to the report (November 13, 2023) from the Medical Officer of Health, when developing the dedicated surveillance framework."

**(b) That metrics be considered to measure the causal factors of serious climate-related health issues.**

While the proposed indicators rightfully considers serious issues such as morbidity, hospital visits, and illness, the proposed indicators are light on the intermediate causes of these issues, such as indoor heat or lack of flood protection.

**(c) That the Toronto Heat Safety Coalition be consulted.** In June of 2024, a coalition consisting of environmental, health, tenant, legal, and seniors organizations formed the Toronto Heat Safety Coalition.<sup>2</sup> TEA strongly recommends that members of the Toronto Heat Safety Coalition be consulted on the TPH's Climate Change Monitoring process. Members of the Coalition can be found in the attached addendum.

We hope that Toronto Public Health will take greater emphasis on the indoor impacts of climate change and look forward to engaging with Toronto Public Health on this important process.

Sincerely,



How-Sen Chong  
Climate Campaigner  
Toronto Environmental Alliance

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<sup>2</sup> See the press release about the coalition here:

<https://www.torontoenvironment.org/new-coalition-calls-on-city-to-protect-toronto-tenants-from-extreme-heat>

# About Toronto Heat Safety

The following organizations have endorsed this call to action



**ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now)** is a multi-issue, membership-based community union of low- and moderate-income people that has over 177,000 members organized into 30 neighbourhood chapters in 10 regions across 6 provinces.



**Advocacy Centre for the Elderly (ACE)** is a specialty community legal clinic committed to upholding the rights of low-income seniors. Its purpose is to improve the quality of life of seniors by providing direct legal assistance, public legal education, law reform, community development, and community organizing.



**Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO)** is a specialty community legal clinic with a mandate to advance and protect the interests of low-income tenants.



**ARCH Disability Law Centre** is a specialty community legal clinic dedicated to defending and advancing the equality rights, entitlements, fundamental freedoms, and inclusion of persons with disabilities in Ontario.



**Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment (CAPE)** supports physicians to be advocates for healthier environments and ecosystems and takes action to enable health for all by engaging with governments, running campaigns, conducting research, and drawing media attention to key issues.



**Canadian Environmental Law Association (CELA)** is a legal aid clinic dedicated to environmental equity, justice, and health. Founded in 1970, CELA is one of the oldest advocates for environmental protection in the country.



**Climate Justice Toronto (CJTO)** is a membership-led democratic organization fighting for transformative class-based climate action in Toronto and beyond.



**Community Resilience to Extreme Weather (CREW)** inspires, enables, and supports community-led multi-generational, multi-stakeholder networking that increases awareness of local climate change impacts and promotes local resiliencies, especially for the more vulnerable.



**Low-Income Energy Network (LIEN)** is a joint program of CELA and ACTO and envisions an Ontario where everyone has equitable access to conservation and financial assistance programs and services to meet their basic energy needs affordably and sustainably.



**Seniors for Climate Action Now! (SCAN) - Toronto** is a seniors' climate action group that is democratic, accountable, equitable, and participatory. SCAN! informs and mobilizes seniors in order to prevent more climate catastrophes.



**Toronto Environmental Alliance (TEA)** has campaigned locally to find solutions to Toronto's urban environmental problems for over 35 years and advocates on behalf of all Torontonians for a green, healthy, and equitable city.