

Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit
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www.pcchu.ca



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Smog Alert Issued for Peterborough Region

Residents Advised to Monitor Situation

Monday, August 30, 2010, Peterborough

The Peterborough County-City Health Unit (PCCHU) announced today that a Smog Advisory has been issued by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment for the Peterborough-Kawartha Lakes region.

A Smog Advisory means that there is a strong likelihood that there may be poor air quality within the next 24 hours due to ground-level ozone and/or particulate matter. Residents are urged to monitor the situation and to take actions if and when a smog episode occurs.

During a Smog Alert, the public is advised to take precautions to minimize exposure to air pollutants and to refrain from activities that could worsen air quality. Those at particular risk include young children, the elderly, asthmatics, vulnerable populations and anyone with existing respiratory or coronary conditions. The following is suggested to protect those most affected by smog:

- Avoid strenuous exercise and limit outdoor activities
- Reschedule or plan outdoor activities for early in the morning or late in the day when pollutant levels are considerably lower
- Keep away from high traffic areas to reduce exposure to vehicle exhaust
- Stay inside in a cool air-conditioned or well-ventilated environment
- Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration
- Seek medical attention if you are experiencing tightness in the chest, coughing, wheezing or shortness of breath, excessive weakness or fatigue

Individuals and businesses can make a big difference in helping to reduce smog levels, including:

- Limit the use of cars: Walk, cycle, carpool or take public transit
- Telecommute (work from home) and teleconference whenever possible
- Reduce unnecessary engine idling of your vehicle at all times
- Avoid using two-stroke engines, e.g. lawnmowers and leaf blowers
- Enjoy light meals that require little or no cooking

NEWS RELEASE

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- Restrict the use of oil-based paints, solvents, pesticides, glues, gas-powered engines (such as lawnmowers and leaf blowers) and barbecues
- Conserve energy: Turn down the air conditioner and turn off lights you are not using. Use energy efficient light bulbs. Install low-flow showerheads and aerators in faucets to conserve water

In addition to the risk of poor air quality, the Peterborough region is also experiencing very high temperatures. The Health Unit advises local residents to protect their health by taking the following precautions:

- Keep your home cool
- Stay out of the heat
- Keep your body cool and hydrated
- Help others who may be vulnerable to extreme heat to ensure their well-being, access to cool space and adequate hydration.
- Know the signs of heat related illness and know what to do

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- heavy sweating
- muscle cramps
- weakness
- headache
- fainting
- paleness, tiredness
- dizziness, nausea

For more information about smog in the Peterborough area, please visit <http://www.pcchu.ca/HH/HH-smog.html> or the Air Quality Ontario website at: www.airqualityontario.com.

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For further information, please contact:

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