

News Release



For Immediate Release
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POLITICIANS ACROSS GTA PARTICIPATE IN AIR QUALITY SAMPLING

TORONTO – Mayors and Councillors from five locations across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) are out on the streets today taking air samples to raise awareness of the negative effects of air pollution on our health announced Eva Ligeti, Executive Director of the Clean Air Partnership.

Mayor Morrison of the Town of Caledon, Mayor Gray of the City of Oshawa, Councillor Frustaglio of the City of Vaughan, Councillor Hogg of the Town of Richmond Hill, and Toronto City Councillor Filion are participating in the air sampling to examine the effects of vehicular traffic on our air quality. Environmental engineering students from the University of Toronto are assisting the politicians.

Smog contains two key ingredients, ground level ozone and particulate matter. The samples measure fine and ultrafine particulate matter.

"Particulate matter is the least understood component of air pollution" says Prof. Greg Evans "Fine and ultrafine particulate matter impact us at all times of the year, unlike smog, which we literally see as a summer problem. This exercise has provided a wonderful opportunity for community learning for our engineering students" Evans added, "and given them a chance to use their knowledge to raise local awareness of the problem of particulate matter in vehicle emissions."

Particulate matter is consistently linked as having a significant negative effect on human health.

"Doctors refer to these as respirable particles because they are so tiny that they find their way deep into our lungs, said Dr. Ted Boadway, Executive Director of Health Policy at the Ontario Medical Association. "They are the culprit in many smog-related illnesses and their impact can be felt in the thousands of emergency room visits and millions of dollars in health costs every year."

The outcomes of the sampling will be unveiled at a media conference at Queen's Park on June 7th, where science, health, and environment experts will join the media to describe emission reduction strategies needed to improve the quality of air we breathe.

The air sampling is part of the Clean Air Partnership's Smog Summit. On June 8, all levels of government gather to address air pollution issues, make commitments and sign the *Inter-governmental Declaration on Clean Air* as a culmination of a year of action and leadership to reduce air pollution in the GTA airshed.

The Clean Air Partnership, a charitable organization that works in partnership to promote and coordinate improvements to local air quality, presents this event. The Clean Air Partnership organizes the Smog Summit and GTA Clean Air Council meetings. Sponsors of the Smog Summit include: Toronto Atmospheric Fund, Enbridge Gas Distribution, Toronto Hydro Corporation, Government of Canada, Government of Ontario, City of Toronto, and the GTA Clean Air Council. For more information and a full schedule of events visit www.smogsummit.org.

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For more information visit www.cleanairpartnership.org