

TORONTO AND REGION 2004 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DECLARATION ON CLEAN AIR

PREAMBLE

WHEREAS representatives of the City of Toronto, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada, out of concern for the risks that air pollution poses to public health and the local economy, gathered in Toronto on June 21, 2000 and together with representatives of municipal governments in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), gathered again on the occasion of the Toronto Smog Summits in 2001, 2002 and 2003 to sign **Inter-governmental Declarations on Clean Air**;

AND WHEREAS the GTA Clean Air Council has been working to follow up on key issues raised at previous Summits, to convene ongoing annual Summits, to explore opportunities for joint initiatives between annual Summits, and to liaise with other municipalities across Canada to share best practices information on smog reduction;

AND WHEREAS annual Smog Summits are a part of the ongoing efforts of our respective governments to address the air pollution problem;

AND WHEREAS progress to date on the path toward cleaner air, in the form of individual and joint announcements made by GTA member governments at previous Smog Summits, is recorded in the GTA Clean Air Council's publication entitled *Governments' Actions on Clean Air in the GTA*;

AND WHEREAS this Smog Summit marks the fifth annual Smog Summit, with much having been accomplished, and much remaining to be done;

AND WHEREAS we, the representatives of the City of Toronto, local and regional municipal governments in the GTA, the Government of Ontario, and the Government of Canada, have gathered in Toronto on June 21, 2004 on the occasion of the fifth Smog Summit;

THANKING Enbridge Gas Distribution Inc., Toronto Hydro, the Government of Ontario, the Government of Canada, the Toronto Atmospheric Fund, and the City of Toronto for providing financial support for the Summit; and

THANKING the member jurisdictions for providing financial support for the GTA Clean Air Council work program and assistance in developing the Toronto and Region 2004 Inter-governmental Declaration on Clean Air, thanking the corporations, non-governmental organizations and members of the public who assisted in planning the Summit, and thanking the Clean Air Partnership and the City of Toronto for organizing the Summit.

WE DO HEREBY DECLARE:

ARTICLE 1 – STATEMENT OF COMMON UNDERSTANDING

- 1.1 Scientists and physicians have linked air pollution to premature deaths, illnesses and hospitalization each year in major Canadian cities, including the GTA. Even a small increase in air pollution increases health impacts, particularly in those who are sensitive to air pollution. Air pollution-related illnesses impact the local economy as well as our well-being.
- 1.2 Smog and climate change are two atmospheric problems sharing common sources. Fossil-fuel combustion is a key contributor to air pollution, producing smog precursors and greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1.3 Actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions are often associated with reductions of other atmospheric emissions that contribute to smog and its associated health, economic and ecosystem effects. Equally, a key co-benefit of reducing smog precursors is to reduce some greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1.4 A number of sources are responsible for a large proportion of the emissions of major air pollutants in the GTA. The major air pollutants include nitrogen oxides (NO_x), sulphur oxides (SO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), inhalable particulate matter (PM₁₀), respirable particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and carbon monoxide (CO). The primary sources of these pollutants are:
 - industrial activity,
 - electric power generation,
 - on-road and off-road use of diesel fuel and gasoline,
 - residential fuel and fuel wood combustion, and
 - surface coating and solvent applications.
- 1.5 Ground level ozone is a principal constituent of smog. It is formed via reactions of precursor gases, including NO_x and VOCs, in the presence of solar radiation and ambient heat. Ozone can irritate lung passages and cause inflammation. Symptoms include wheezing, coughing and breathing difficulties. People with respiratory problems are most vulnerable, but healthy people who are active outdoors can also be affected when ozone levels are high. Even at very low levels, ground-level ozone triggers a variety of health problems including aggravated asthma, reduced lung capacity and worsening of symptoms from respiratory illnesses like pneumonia and bronchitis. Ozone also has detrimental effects on plants and ecosystems.
- 1.6 Particulate matter (PM), a principal constituent of smog, may be released directly into the air from a variety of sources, or indirectly formed from precursors including NO_x, SO₂, ammonia, and VOCs. The finer the particle, the greater the threat it poses to human health because it can be inhaled deeper into the lungs. Short-term exposure to PM at the levels typically found in urban areas in Canada is associated with a variety of adverse

health effects. PM can irritate the eyes, nose and throat and cause coughing, breathing difficulties, reduced lung function and aggravate asthma. Exposure to PM is also associated with an increase in the number of emergency department visits, an increase in hospitalizations of people with cardiac and respiratory disease, and premature mortality. Some studies suggest that long-term exposure to PM can increase risk of death from lung cancer.

- 1.7 The air quality index is used to inform the public of current and forecasted air quality conditions, allowing them to take appropriate action to protect their health, and to reduce emissions resulting from their own activities. Smog alerts are used to make people aware of periods of poor air quality when the health risk is increased. Because the number of smog alerts per year depends very heavily on weather patterns, the number of smog days alone does not tell us whether our air is getting “better” or “worse” over time.
- 1.8 Compact urban form, combined with pedestrian and transit-friendly design, fosters opportunities to reduce air pollution through the shift from automobiles to alternate forms of transportation like walking, cycling and transit, thereby creating the potential to reduce emissions from single-occupancy vehicles.
- 1.9 Addressing key sources of major air pollutants requires collaboration of all levels of government.

ARTICLE 2 – SIGNATORIES TO THE 2004 INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DECLARATION ON CLEAN AIR

**Town of Ajax
City of Brampton
City of Burlington
Town of Caledon
Government of Canada
Municipality of Clarington
Durham Region
Regional Municipality of Halton
Township of King
Town of Markham
City of Mississauga
Town of Newmarket
Town of Oakville**

**Government of Ontario
City of Oshawa
Region of Peel
City of Pickering
Town of Richmond Hill
Township of Scugog
City of Toronto
Township of Uxbridge
City of Vaughan
Town of Whitby
Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville
Region of York**

ARTICLE 3 – CALL FOR GTA CLEAN AIR COUNCIL ACTION

In order to reduce air pollution in the GTA airshed, the GTA Clean Air Council (GTA-CAC) has identified needed research, studies, workshops and actions and, where appropriate, will initiate the following joint actions:

- 3.1 Identify opportunities and catalogue progress in GTA-CAC member organizations to implement energy retrofit measures to improve the energy efficiency of buildings and operation of facilities within their jurisdictions.
- 3.2 Explore and promote the benefits of adopting an ENERGY STAR® corporate procurement policy by GTA-CAC members, which would require that procurement of new computer technology, appliances and other applicable office and operations equipment be ENERGY STAR certified.
- 3.3 Explore and promote the benefits of developing a consistent approach to exceeding building performance for new construction projects by GTA-CAC members by a minimum of 25 per cent better than the current Model National Energy Code For Buildings.
- 3.4 Evaluate the effectiveness of municipal emission reduction measures, with a view to sharing and encouraging best practices and developing a model Clean Air Plan for smog and greenhouse gas emission reductions.
- 3.5 Promote the development and use of supplies of green power from solar, wind, small-scale hydro and district energy systems from diverse power producers including power co-operatives, municipal utilities, district energy companies and other energy producers with low environmental impacts.
- 3.6 Explore opportunities to share data for GTA-wide air quality modelling and examine the potential to improve estimates of public health impacts.
- 3.7 Promote the benefits of trip reduction strategies, more energy-efficient commuter options and the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle trips, through workshops at workplaces in government and business organizations.
- 3.8 Support GTA-CAC members and community organizations throughout the GTA to raise awareness about the benefits of reducing unnecessary engine idling and conduct idle-free campaigns.
- 3.9 Develop model anti-idling practices and policies for GTA-CAC member fleets and research specific requirements for identified priority areas such as schools, public buildings, hospitals and transit stations.
- 3.10 Explore opportunities to support and coordinate with the Smart Commute Initiative pilot projects within the GTA and Hamilton.

- 3.11 Launch Clean Air Online (CAOL) in 2004, a Web-based clearinghouse to provide the public with timely and locally relevant information on smog, air quality, climate change and related health and environmental impacts, and to provide links to Web sites of GTA-CAC members and other environmental organizations.
- 3.12 Expand outreach, coordination and facilitation of public awareness and involvement in 20/20 The Way to Clean Air throughout the GTA in schools, workplaces and at community events, where possible.