



Hamilton

HEAT RESPONSE STRATEGY

Public Health Committee

April 29, 2024

BOH24010

Background

- The City of Hamilton Climate Science Report predicts that the number of consecutive days that the temperature rises above 30°C will increase and that heat waves, defined as three days or more where the temperature is over 30°C or 40 on the humidex scale, will be more frequent, as well as, temperatures over 35°C.
- In May 2023, Public Health Services indicated it would bring more information regarding a Community Heat Response Strategy 2024-2027 for the City of Hamilton in Q1 2024.
- Ten Heat Response Strategy actions were identified via research evidence, consultation and engagement with staff across relevant City divisions
- Five of the identified heat response actions are already in practice
- Five of the identified actions are “new” for Committee’s consideration
- The Heat Response Strategy aligns with mandated work for Public Health Services as outlined in the Ontario Public Health Standards’ “Healthy Environments” program standard.

Consultation

- Throughout the development of the Community Heat Response Strategy, consultation and engagement was carried-out with staff across relevant City divisions
- Public Health Services expanded on the Extreme Heat Working Group that was initiated during a former Public Health Services extreme heat project
- The Extreme Heat Working group includes internal City staff as well as local community partners providing services to individuals disproportionately impacted by extreme heat
- The Extreme Heat Working Group met monthly and discussed actions and recommendations in the Community Heat Response Strategy

Extreme Heat Working Group Members

- Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN)
- Accessibility Committee for Persons with Disabilities
- Canadian Health Association for Sustainability and Equity
- City Housing Hamilton
- City of Hamilton, Housing Services
- City of Hamilton, Office of Climate Change Initiatives
- City of Hamilton, Parks and Cemeteries
- City of Hamilton, Public Health Services
- City of Hamilton, Recreation
- Environment Hamilton
- Hamilton 350
- Hamilton and District Apartment Association
- Hamilton Community Legal Clinic
- Hamilton Public Library
- Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction
- Hamilton Street Railway (HSR)
- Native Women's Centre
- Salvation Army
- Seniors Advisory Committee
- Victoria Order of Nurses (VON)
- Wesley
- YWCA History

At-Risk Populations

- Extreme heat puts everyone at risk of heat-related illness, however some individuals are at increased risk, including:
 - Those age 65 years and older;
 - Young children;
 - People with chronic medical conditions; and,
 - People who work and are active outdoors.
- Public Health Services uses Heat and Vulnerability Mapping to determine areas where citizens are at highest risk of heat-related illness
- The Community Heat Response Strategy Actions are targeted to protect individuals at highest risk of heat-related illness

Heat and Vulnerability Mapping



Université Laval's Heat Map: <https://vaguesdechaleur.ffgg.ulaval.ca/en/>

Existing Actions

1	Education and Outreach	Distribution of cooling items to educate and encourage individual heat adaptive behaviours. Public engagement and education. Distribution of educational materials. Distribution of water bottles and access to drinking water.
2	Heat Warning Notification	Alerts issued to public to advise of heat warnings and extended heat warnings with heat safety tips.
3	Cool Places	Air-conditioned public spaces as well as public swims and spray pads to provide respite during heat warnings. Expansion of services to highest-risk population during heat warnings.
4	Cooling and Energy Efficiency Support	Subsidies and/or rebates for improving energy efficiency in homes or buildings. (i.e. Better Homes Hamilton Project Supports this).
		Advocacy to other levels of government to provide affordable and accessible cooling (e.g. application for an air conditioner) for at-risk people who qualify (e.g., based on income status and/or a prescribed medical need).
		Adequate Temperature By-Law Development.
5	Vegetation Cover Expansion and Maintenance	Reducing artificial surfaces, through increasing vegetation in parking areas, alleyways, streets, and other infrastructure.

“New” Actions

6*	Wellness Check-Ins	Leveraging emergency and community services to assist at risk populations during heat events to provide welfare calls/check-ins.
7*	Shade Structures	Installation of shade structures in areas identified using heat and equity mapping.
8	Heat-Related Illness Population Health Surveillance	Real-time surveillance of local population health data during the extreme heat season (i.e. Acute Care Enhanced Surveillance, Paramedic Data).
9*	Misting stations	Installation of misting stations in identified priority locations.
10*	Transportation	Free or discounted, reliable transportation during heat warnings and extended heat warnings to cool places.

*Pending Deliberations by General Issues Committee

Next Steps

- Public Health Services, in collaboration with partners, will conduct further consultation and engagement with at-risk communities to determine how to best deliver services moving forward
- Continue to work with community partners to identify gaps and align actions and services with the needs of the community
- Implement Committee/Council-approved newly identified actions



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THANK YOU