

Climate Change and Health



What is the role of Public Health in Climate Change?

- Impacts so many of our OPHS Standards:

Healthy Environments

Goal

To reduce exposure to health hazards⁹ and promote the development of healthy built and natural environments that support health and mitigate existing and emerging risks, including the impacts of a changing climate.

Ontario Public Health Standards:

Requirements for Programs, Services and Accountability

Protecting and Promoting the Health of Ontarians

Effective: June, 2021

Website- Health Information


https://healthunit.org/health-information/climate-change/

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Climate Change

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What is climate change?

Climate change is a long-term shift in the average weather conditions of a region, such as its typical temperature, rainfall, and windiness. Climate change means that the range of conditions expected in many regions will change over the coming decades. This means that there will also be changes in extreme conditions.

Peer reviewed scientific studies show **more than 99% consensus** that climate change has been caused by human activities. While some climate change is natural, current climate change is mainly caused by human activities that release greenhouse gases (GHG) into the atmosphere.

The main GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), and water vapour. [Watch this video from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration \(NASA\)](#) to learn what the greenhouse effect is. Greenhouse gases are in the Earth's atmosphere and more will be added while we continue to burn fossil fuels. Because of this, we try to improve the impact of climate change in two ways: **mitigation** and **adaptation**.

- Climate Change Mitigation
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Climate Change and Health
- Climate Change Data
- Local Climate Change Groups

Mitigation

- **Climate change mitigation** refers to actions that can help to reduce new greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that are added to the Earth's atmosphere through human activity.

The screenshot shows the website of the Leach, Greenfield & Linak District Health Unit. The header includes the organization's logo and navigation links: About, Clinics & Classes, Health Information, and For Professionals. A banner image features a world map with temperature markers (+1°C, +2°C, +3°C) and a green shield with 'CO₂'. Below the banner is a search bar and a breadcrumb trail: Home » Health Information » Climate Change » Climate Change Mitigation. The main content area defines climate change mitigation and lists actions to reduce GHG emissions, such as getting involved in municipal planning, creating active transportation infrastructure, and planting trees. A sidebar on the right contains a vertical menu of links: Climate Change, Climate Change Mitigation (highlighted), Climate Change Adaptation, Climate Change and Health, Climate Change Data, and Local Climate Change Groups. A circular logo at the bottom right says 'REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT'.

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+3°C
+2°C
+1°C

Climate Change Mitigation

CO₂

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Climate change **mitigation** refers to actions that can help to reduce new greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that are added to the Earth's atmosphere through human activity.

What can you do to help reduce new GHG emissions?

- **Get involved in municipal planning and community-building initiatives.** Use the citizens guide to land use planning to learn how you can get involved in planning and building your community.
 - Advocate for policies and action in your community that:
 - Create more active transportation infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, bicycle paths, crosswalks, etc.) and reduce the number of motor vehicle trips that are taken
 - Create more greenspaces and parks
 - Plant more trees

REDUCE YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT

Climate Change
Climate Change Mitigation
Climate Change Adaptation
Climate Change and Health
Climate Change Data
Local Climate Change Groups

What can Municipalities can do to mitigate CC?

[Lanark County Climate Action Plan](#)-See the GHG sources for Lanark County

For Municipalities **Mitigation** can include many things such as:

Policies, planning and actions working to:

- Create more active transportation infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, bicycle paths, crosswalks, etc.) and reduce the number of motor vehicle trips that are taken
- Create more greenspaces and parks
- Retrofit buildings
- Plant more trees
- Encourage and enabling composting
- Encourage greater use of renewable energy

Adaptation

- **Climate change adaptation** refers to the actions that will help us manage and reduce the negative impacts of climate change now and into the future.

The screenshot shows the website of the Leeds, Grenville & Essex District Health Unit. The header is blue with the unit's logo and navigation links: About, Clinics & Classes, Health Information, and For Professionals. A large banner features a world map with temperature lines (+1°C to +4°C) and a green shield with 'CO₂'. A yellow box highlights 'Climate Change Adaptation'. Below the banner is a search bar and a breadcrumb trail: Home » Health Information » Climate Change » Climate Change Adaptation. A 'Print this Page' button is on the right. The main content area defines climate change adaptation and lists actions to take, including getting involved in municipal planning and checking on neighbours. A sidebar on the right contains a vertical menu with links to Climate Change, Climate Change Mitigation, Climate Change Adaptation (highlighted), Climate Change and Health, Climate Change Data, and Local Climate Change Groups.

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+4°C
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+2°C
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Climate Change Adaptation

CO₂

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Climate change adaptation refers to the actions that will help us manage and reduce the negative impacts of climate change now and into the future.

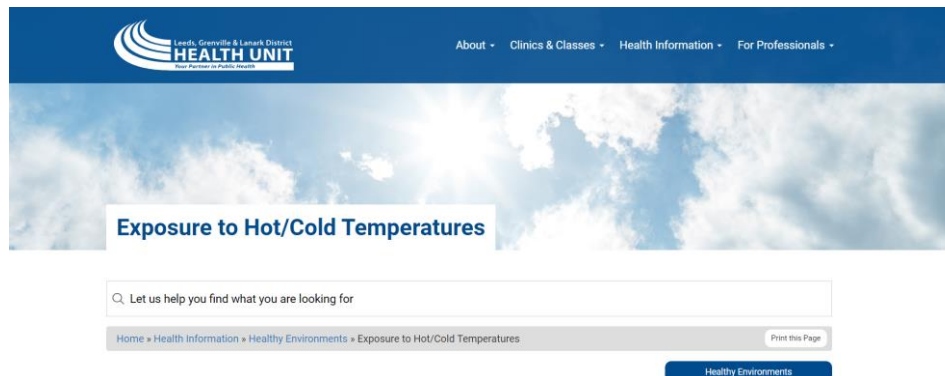
What can you do to adapt to the impacts of climate change?

- Get involved in municipal planning and community-building initiatives. Use the [citizen's guide to land use planning](#) to learn how you can get involved in planning and building your community.
 - Advocate for policies and action in your community that:
 - Provide places (e.g., shaded areas, splash pads, wading pools, etc.) to cool down during days of extreme heat
 - Reduce the risk of flooding
 - Protect the local food system from production to waste management
- Check on a neighbour or a friend who may have a greater risk of suffering negative health consequences from

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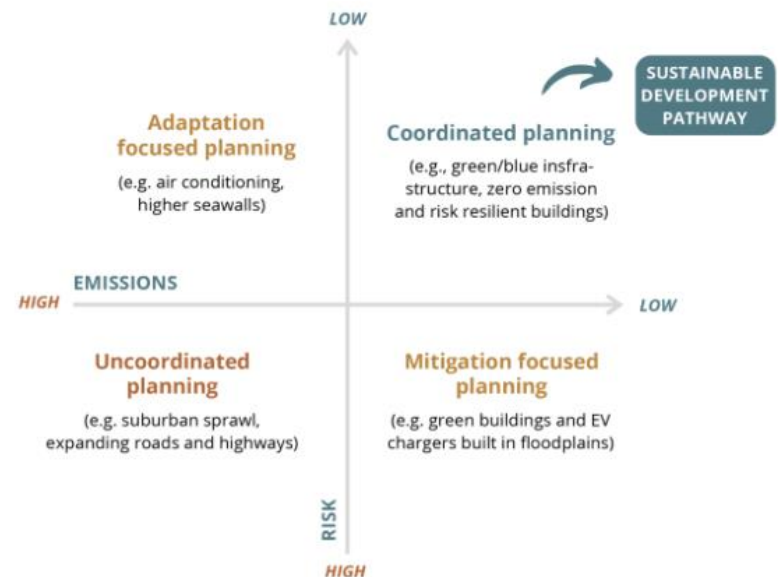
What can Municipalities can do to adapt to CC?

- Maintain and add natural and green infrastructure
- Build resilient communities (strategies to manage heat, flooding, wind) [See FCM-climate-innovation-program](#)
- Emergency planning
- Education and outreach to areas where vulnerabilities have been identified



Can you do both?

- Short Answer is Yes! Although you need to plan strategically.
- Low carbon resilience (LCR) is the strategic integration of climate change adaptation and emissions reductions. Taking measures that integrate the two climate action streams enhances the effectiveness of both strategies. It avoids risks and generates economic, ecological and social benefits.



The LCR quadrant diagram illustrates the benefits of integrating adaptation and mitigation (upper right quadrant), rather than pursuing adaptation or mitigation in siloes (top left, bottom right) (ACT, 2020, adapted from Cohen & Waddell, 2009).

Climate Change and Health

- The multiple impacts of climate change on the environment and the communities we live in affects our health.

The screenshot shows the website for the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit. The header includes the organization's name and navigation links: About, Clinics & Classes, Health Information, and For Professionals. A large graphic features a world map with temperature markers (+1°C, +2°C, +3°C, +4°C) and a green shield with 'CO₂'.

Climate Change and Health

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The multiple impacts of climate change on the environment and the communities we live in results in a variety of health issues:

- **Extreme heat** – heat stroke, cardiovascular failure, death
- **Severe weather events** – injuries, death, mental health impacts
- **Air pollution** – asthma, cardiovascular disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)
- **Changes affecting vector-borne diseases** – Lyme disease, West Nile virus, Hantavirus
- **Increases in allergens** – asthma, respiratory disease
- **Water quality changes** – illness from bacteria (e.g., campylobacter), toxicity from algal blooms
- **Food and water supply changes** – decreased access to food, malnutrition, diarrheal disease
- **Environmental degradation** – mental health impacts (e.g., climate anxiety), forced migration, loss of income (e.g., farmers losing crops)

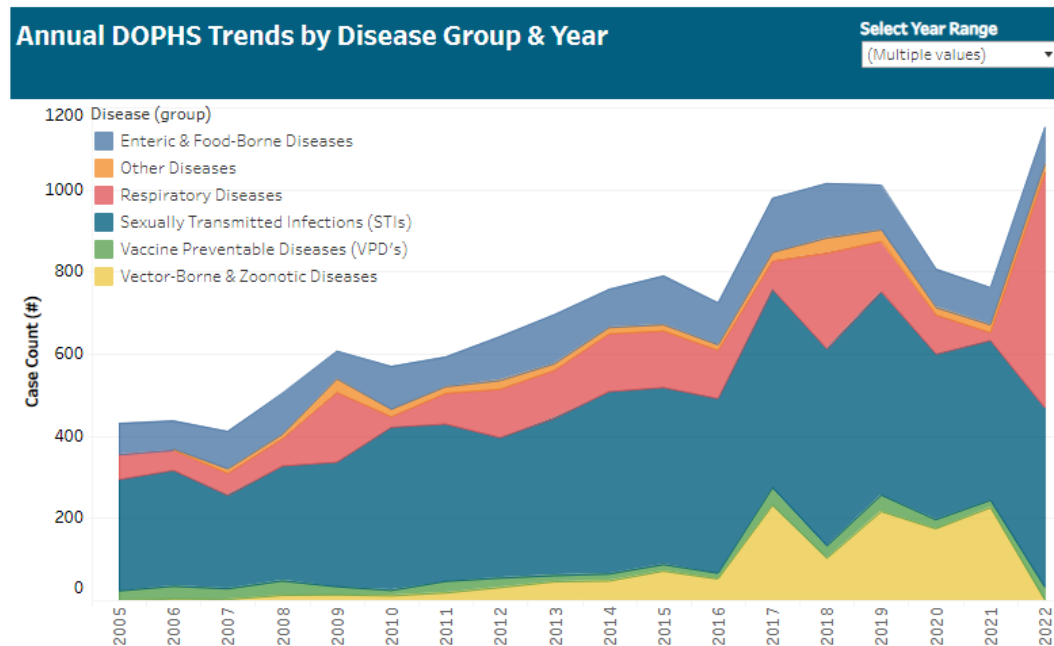
For more information, visit the Climate Effects on Health webpage from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and watch the video below.

Navigation buttons on the right:

- Climate Change
- Climate Change Mitigation
- Climate Change Adaptation
- Climate Change and Health**
- Climate Change Data
- Local Climate Change Groups

Climate Change Data

- General Climate Change [Data links on our website](#)
- Local Data that can be used for planning is [in our dashboards](#)



See Where the Action is!

- If you or the community want to take action join an existing group, collaborate and share them here!

The screenshot shows the website of the Leeds, Grenville & Lanark District Health Unit. The header is dark blue with the unit's logo and navigation links: About, Clinics & Classes, Health Information, and For Professionals. The main banner features a world map with temperature markers (+4°C, +3°C, +2°C, +1°C, +0°C) and a green shield with 'CO₂'. Below the banner, the title 'Local Climate Change Groups' is displayed. A search bar with the placeholder 'Let us help you find what you are looking for' is present. A breadcrumb trail reads 'Home » Health Information » Climate Change » Local Climate Change Groups', followed by a 'Print this Page' link. The main text states: 'Climate change can cause some people stress and anxiety and they may benefit from taking action and knowing that they are working on solutions. Check with your municipality to see if they have climate change committees. To learn more or to get involved, visit the websites of local groups taking action on climate change:'. Below this, a bullet point mentions the 'Climate Network Lanark'. On the right, three blue buttons are stacked: 'Climate Change', 'Climate Change Mitigation', and 'Climate Change Adaptation'.

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+4°C
+3°C
+2°C
+1°C
+0°C

Local Climate Change Groups

CO₂

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Climate change can cause some people stress and anxiety and they may benefit from taking action and knowing that they are working on solutions. Check with your municipality to see if they have climate change committees. To learn more or to get involved, visit the websites of local groups taking action on climate change:

- Climate Network Lanark – The mission of the Network is to connect, co-ordinate, facilitate, initiate and support collaborative efforts and actions by and for the community to address the impacts of climate change through

Climate Change
Climate Change Mitigation
Climate Change Adaptation

Why is this relevant to Municipalities?

Climate damages are [costing Canada billions](#)—acting now can limit future damage. How can we do this?

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Leeds-Grenville municipalities declare Significant Weather Event as winter storm begins

By **Steve Berard** Friday, Dec. 23rd, 2022

Health Unit: Heat Warning Issued for the Leeds, Grenville, Lanark (LGL) Region

📺 Hometown TV12 · 🕒 3 months ago · ⏱ 3 min read



Brockville – It's hot outside and the extreme heat is expected to last into Friday which has resulted in Environment Canada issuing a heat warning. While many welcome the warmer weather, the Health Unit is sending a reminder that high temperatures may impact your health. Heat warnings are issued when:

- A daytime temperature of 31°C or higher and nighttime temperature not cooler than 20°C lasts for at least two days; or,
- A humidex of 40°C for at least two days is expected.

Local News

Thunderstorms, tornado warnings bring long weekend to anxious close

Sharbot Lake, Lanark County, Smiths Falls, Perth were under the warning issued at 4:51 p.m. as a severe thunderstorm capable of producing a tornado was moving eastward across Lanark county.

Meghan Hurley · Ottawa Citizen

Published May 18, 2015 · Last updated Jun 02, 2020 · 1 minute read



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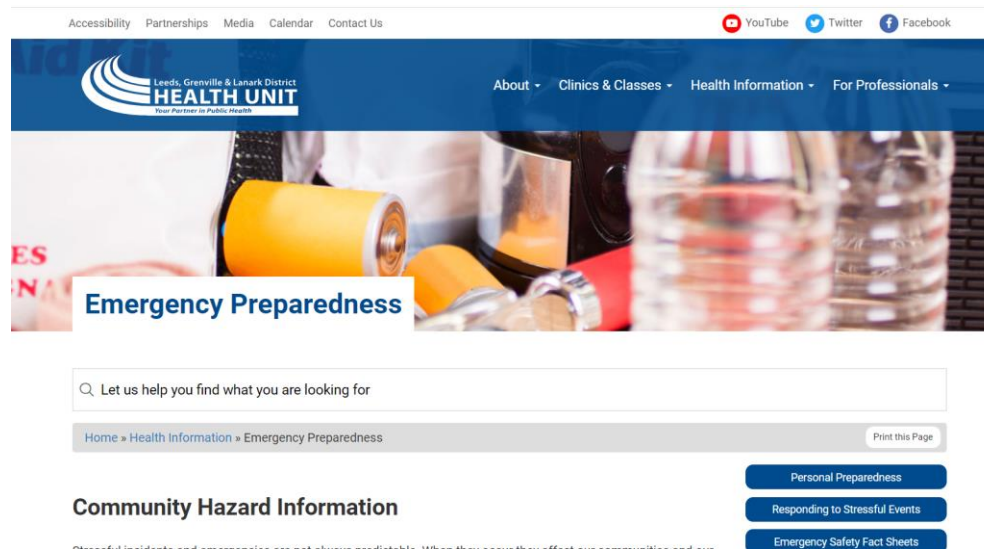
Water safety statement continues as mild weather could push lakes, rivers higher in Leeds-Grenville: CRCA

🕒 February 21, 2022 📍 Bill Kingston ➡ News

What can Municipalities Do?

Municipalities can take action in a variety of ways to reduce the damage that could be caused by climate change.

- Emergency Planning
- Infrastructure Planning
- Climate Change Planning
- Community education, communication, and coordination



Knowing the Risks and being prepared for them

Know the most likely risks and make mitigation and adaptation plans for them.

- In Leeds, Grenville and Lanark Counties

[Emergency Preparedness website outlines](#)

the following hazards are more likely to occur:

- [Severe Storms](#)
- [Flooding](#)
- [Drought](#)
- [Power Outages](#)
- [Tornados](#)
- [Wildfires](#)
- [Earthquakes](#)

Climate Change and Extreme Weather



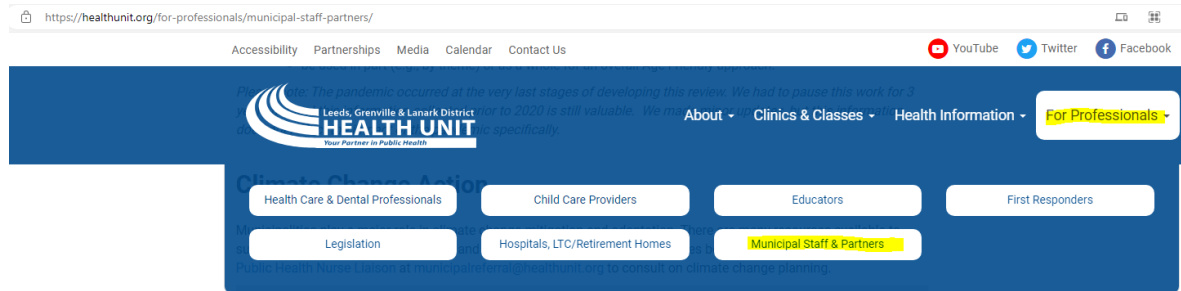
Climate change causes more extreme weather hazards that pose direct and indirect health risks. The risks vary from one area to another due to differences in landscape and climate across our region and throughout the seasons.

Health risks result from extreme weather hazards:

- Floods and droughts
 - » increase risk of: unsafe drinking water, waterborne diseases, injuries, psychological impacts, loss of property/infrastructure, negative impacts on food systems/production
- Wildfires
 - » reduce air quality and increasing risk of injury, respiratory issues, psychological impacts, and loss of property/infrastructure
- Severe storms
 - » increase risk of injury, heat stroke, hypothermia, worsening of health conditions, psychological impacts, and loss of property
- Heat and cold events
 - » increase risk of heat stroke, algal blooms, food borne pathogens, hypothermia, worsening of health conditions
- Erratic or changing weather patterns
 - » increase risk of injuries due to unsafe ice during winter



Resources for our Municipal Partners



Climate Change Action

Municipalities play a major role in climate change mitigation and adaptation. There are many resources available to support municipalities with mitigation and adaptation actions. See the resources below and contact your Municipal Public Health Nurse Liaison at municipalreferral@healthunit.org to consult on climate change planning.

Climate Change Resources for Municipalities

- General
 - [Canada in a Changing Climate](#)
 - This is a national assessment of how and why Canada's climate is changing; the impacts of these changes on our communities, environment, and economy; and how we are adapting.
 - [Climate Atlas of Canada](#)
 - The Atlas explains what climate change is, how it affects Canada and what these changes mean in our communities.
 - Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM)
 - [Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program \(2017-2022\)](#)
 - [Small and Rural Communities Climate Action Guidebook](#)
 - [Tool: Greenhouse gas emissions reduction maturity scale](#)
 - [Guide for Municipal Climate Change Staff](#)
 - Some individuals are more vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and the mitigation efforts to reduce carbon emissions. Consider how to integrate plans that will support those who may be more vulnerable. Use this resource to help: [Integrating equity, diversity and inclusion into municipal climate action](#).
- Extreme heat
 - [Heat Alert and Response Systems to Protect Health: Best Practices Guidebook](#)
 - [Communicating the Health Risks of Extreme Heat Events](#)



HU Advocacy and Education Resources

- Display and fact sheets for making the connection
- Media and Social media messages to share information #ClimateChangeLGL
- Collaboration and feedback on Municipal plans and committee work
- Outreach to the public during climate events (e.g., heat events)

Climate Change and Infectious Diseases



Infectious diseases and the living things that cause and spread them are sensitive to climate change.

As temperatures increase summers become longer and winters become milder. The amount of precipitation (rain, sleet and snow) changes. These changes may allow certain living things like pathogens (cause disease) or vectors (spread disease) to:

- grow in number
- establish in new areas
- expand and shift in how far they reach

This puts you at greater risk of being exposed to new and established diseases that can impact our health.

Some of the increasing risks of climate-driven diseases and infections are:

- viral
- fungal
- bacterial
- parasitic

They may be spread by:

- bugs
- animals
- air and soil

Questions?

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