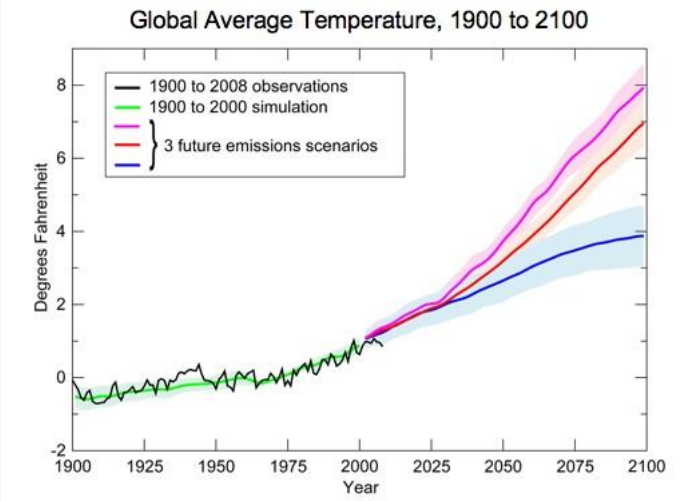
Climate change – public health issue



entation Subtitle

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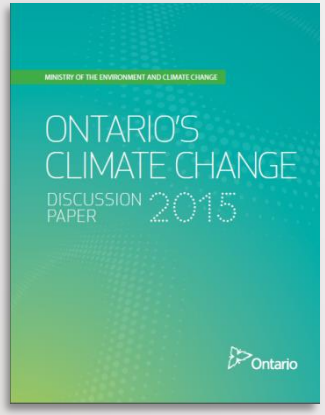
Minister Murray's message

"Climate change is the critical issue of our time."



- "Moving to low-carbon and zero emission transportation options will allow us to move to and from our homes and jobs more efficiently, while improving the air we breathe…"

From: Ontario's Climate Change Discussion Paper 2015. Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change.

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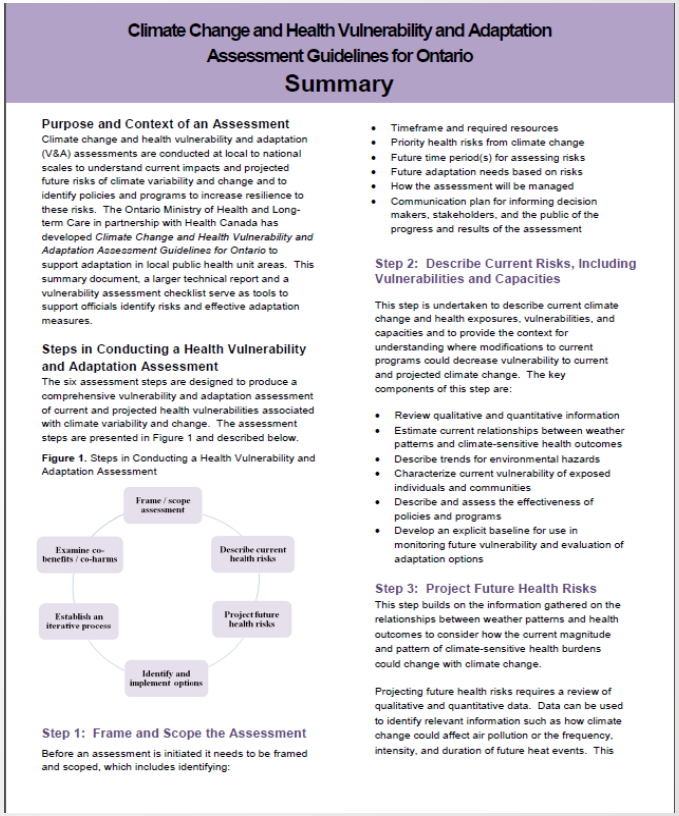
Ontario Public Health Standards

Health Hazard Prevention and Management Standard

- increasing public awareness of health hazards including climate change and emerging health issues associated with extreme weather
- developing policies related to reducing health hazards
- implementing control measures to prevent or reduce exposure to health hazards
- responding to and managing health hazards in the environment
- MOECC – climate data projections & support

Vulnerability Assessment Tool



Climate Change and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment Guidelines for Ontario
Summary

Purpose and Context of an Assessment
Climate change and health vulnerability and adaptation (V&A) assessments are conducted at local to national scales to understand current impacts and projected future risks of climate variability and change and to identify policies and programs to increase resilience to these risks. The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care in partnership with Health Canada has developed *Climate Change and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment Guidelines for Ontario* to support adaptation in local public health unit areas. This summary document, a larger technical report and a vulnerability assessment checklist serve as tools to support officials identify risks and effective adaptation measures.

Steps in Conducting a Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment
The six assessment steps are designed to produce a comprehensive vulnerability and adaptation assessment of current and projected health vulnerabilities associated with climate variability and change. The assessment steps are presented in Figure 1 and described below.

Figure 1. Steps in Conducting a Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment

Step 1: Frame and Scope the Assessment
Before an assessment is initiated it needs to be framed and scoped, which includes identifying:

- Timeframe and required resources
- Priority health risks from climate change
- Future time period(s) for assessing risks
- Future adaptation needs based on risks
- How the assessment will be managed
- Communication plan for informing decision makers, stakeholders, and the public of the progress and results of the assessment

Step 2: Describe Current Risks, Including Vulnerabilities and Capacities

This step is undertaken to describe current climate change and health exposures, vulnerabilities, and capacities and to provide the context for understanding where modifications to current programs could decrease vulnerability to current and projected climate change. The key components of this step are:

- Review qualitative and quantitative information
- Estimate current relationships between weather patterns and climate-sensitive health outcomes
- Describe trends for environmental hazards
- Characterize current vulnerability of exposed individuals and communities
- Describe and assess the effectiveness of policies and programs
- Develop an explicit baseline for use in monitoring future vulnerability and evaluation of adaptation options

Step 3: Project Future Health Risks
This step builds on the information gathered on the relationships between weather patterns and health outcomes to consider how the current magnitude and pattern of climate-sensitive health burdens could change with climate change.

Projecting future health risks requires a review of qualitative and quantitative data. Data can be used to identify relevant information such as how climate change could affect air pollution or the frequency, intensity, and duration of future heat events. This

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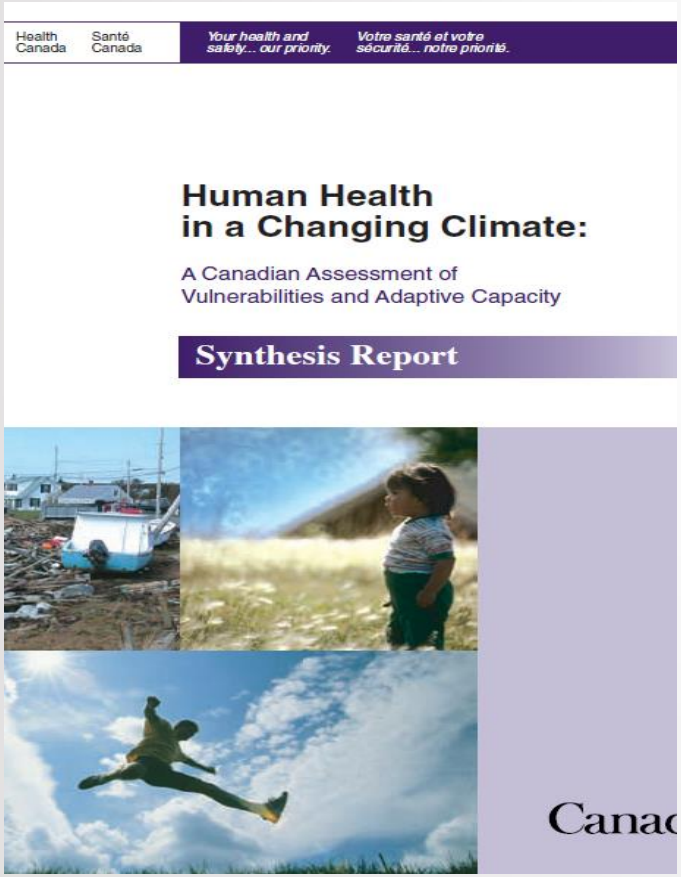

Climate Change

- Adaptation can reduce health risks
- Small communities often less capacity to plan for or cope with the effects of extreme events or health emergencies
- Increased risk of extreme weather & other climate-related events
- Health sector needs to protect health from climate-related risks, incorporate climate-related risks and engage other sectors for future programs
- Regional/community level assessments of health vulnerabilities needed to identify/implement prevention measures

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Context - Human Health Impacts

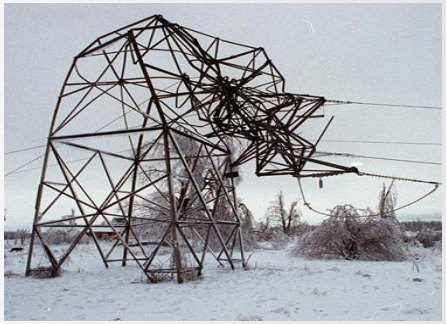
Flooding, wind damage and severe winter storm damage due to extreme weather events

More extremely hot days

Food safety & security

Reduced air quality

Increased risk of warm-climate diseases such as Lyme and West Nile diseases and malaria



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Vulnerable Populations

Proportion of seniors will increase from 13 to 25% by 2031.

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Role for local public health

- Consider preventative health practice
- Local level – practical knowledge and experience can be integrated into adaptation solutions
- Health vulnerability assessment
- Adaptation policies & measures are generally more successful when focused on a specific population and location
- Collaboration & partnership with other agencies
- Surveillance
- Education & Awareness

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Thank you and welcome!
Questions?

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