



ARNPRIOR

**Town of Arnprior  
Regular Meeting of Council: July 8<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Correspondence Package No. I-24-JUL-13**

**Recommendation:**

**That** the Correspondence Package No. I-24-JUL-13 be received as information and filed accordingly.

**General Information Items:**

**1. Correspondence from the Government of Ontario**

- a) Ontario Connecting More Seniors to Dental Care and Affordable Prescription Drugs
- b) Ontario Supporting Firefighters with More Than \$10 million for Training and Infrastructure
- c) Ontario Exploring New Technology to Build Critical Infrastructure Faster
- d) Ontario Begins Automatic Licence Plate Renewals
- e) Ontario Investing in Mental Health Training to Support Police
- f) Ontario Consulting on Expanding Role of Nurse Practitioners
- g) Province Investing in Hydroelectric Energy in Eastern Ontario
- h) Ontario Launching New Certification for Towing Industry
- i) Regulations and Statutes in Force as of July 1, 2024
- j) Ontario Capping Rent Increases at the Lowest Rate in Canada
- k) Ontario Making Electric Vehicle Chargers More Accessible

**2. Correspondence from the County of Renfrew**

- a) County Council Summary – June 2024

**3. Correspondence from the Renfrew County & District Health Unit**

- a) Medical Officer of Health Report to the Board – June 2024

- 4. Correspondence from the Association of Municipalities of Ontario**
  - a) Policy Update – New AMO Advocacy on Homelessness, Opioids, and Water Infrastructure Demonstrate the Critical Need for Social and Economic Prosperity Review
  - b) Watch File – June 20th, 2024
  - c) Watch File – June 27th, 2024
- 5. Correspondence from Eastern Ontario Wardens' Caucus**
  - a) Newsletter – Release of Infrastructure Paper and Strategic Plan
- 6. Correspondence from Community Living Renfrew County South**
  - a) Event Poster – The Unity Run
- 7. Correspondence from Pembroke Regional Health**
  - a) 2024-2029 Strategic Plan
- 8. Correspondence from Residents**
  - a) Parker Bradley – Thank You Card
- 9. Correspondence from Other Municipalities**
  - a) Toronto Zoo – Public Display and Keeping of Exotic Wild Animal Species
  - b) Municipality of West Nipissing – Champlain Bridge Replacement in West Nipissing
  - c) City of Hamilton – No Paid Plasma Zone Resolution
  - d) Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan – Regulations for Importation and Safe Use of Lithium-ion Batteries

## Ontario Connecting More Seniors to Dental Care and Affordable Prescription Drugs

Increased income eligibility will expand access to care for low-income seniors

June 19, 2024

[Health](#)

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is ensuring that the province's most vulnerable seniors can continue to connect to dental care and affordable prescription medications by increasing access to the Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program and the Seniors Co-Payment Program.

On August 1, 2024, the annual income eligibility thresholds for the [Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program](#) and the [Seniors Co-Payment Program](#) will be increased for single Ontarians aged 65 and over from \$22,200 to \$25,000, and from \$37,100 to \$41,500 for couples.

"Our government is continuing to take action to ensure that Ontarians have access to the health care and services they need, at every stage of life," said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. "By breaking down barriers to accessing these programs, we are making it faster and easier for low-income seniors to connect to the care they need, when they need it."

The Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program connects almost 150,000 low-income seniors to free, routine dental care each year. Eligible seniors are encouraged to [apply](#) by going online and downloading and printing the application form or by picking one up at their [local public health unit](#). Seniors who are eligible under the new income thresholds can apply starting July 1, 2024.

The Seniors Co-Payment Program helps keep costs down for low-income seniors who need prescription medications by reducing co-pays to \$2 or less and removing annual deductibles. Eligible seniors who will be 65 on or after July 1, 2024, can apply starting today so they can benefit as soon as possible. Seniors can complete an application [online](#) or request a paper application form be mailed to them by

calling the Seniors Co-Payment Program toll free at 1-888-405-0405 or 416-503-4586. Seniors currently enrolled in the Seniors Co-Payment Program do not need to re-apply.

This increase to the annual income eligibility will also help ensure seniors currently enrolled in these programs that have received additional, financial government support, will continue to be eligible and benefit from these health services.

"The health and well-being of Ontario's seniors is a priority for our government," said Raymond Cho, Minister for Seniors and Accessibility. "By expanding the eligibility threshold for these programs, we are helping to ensure that more seniors across the province can access the dental and health care they deserve to stay healthy, improve their quality of life and age with dignity."

Through [Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care](#), the Ontario government is making it easier and faster for people to connect to the care they need, closer to home.

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#### Quick Facts

- Launched in 2019, the [Ontario Seniors Dental Care Program](#) helps connect eligible low-income seniors across the province with free, routine dental care. To date over 149,000 seniors have enrolled in the program. Seniors who do not have a Social Insurance Number (SIN) or did not file taxes last year, can still [apply](#).
- The [Seniors Co-Payment Program](#) helps low-income seniors access the medication they need with no annual deductible and a reduced co-payment of \$2 or less for each eligible prescription. In 2023, over 400,000 seniors were enrolled.
- People in Ontario are automatically enrolled in the Ontario Drug Benefit Program on the first day of the month after they turn 65 years old. This program covers most of the costs of more than 5,000 prescription drug products. Seniors pay the first \$100 of their prescription drug costs each year (the deductible) and up to \$6.11 for every prescription (the co-payment).

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#### Additional Resources

- Learn more about Dental Care for Low-Income Seniors at [Ontario.ca/SeniorsDental](#)
- [Get Coverage for Prescription Drugs](#)
- [Ontario Expanding Access to Dental Care and Affordable Prescription Drugs for Vulnerable Seniors](#)

- [Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care](#)

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## Related Topics

### Government

Learn about the government services available to you and how government works.

[Learn more](#)

### Health and Wellness

Get help navigating Ontario's health care system and connecting with the programs or services you're looking for. [Learn more](#)

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## Ontario Supporting Firefighters with More Than \$10 million for Training and Infrastructure

Investment will help train thousands of firefighters across the province

June 24, 2024

[Office of the Premier](#)

[Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development](#)

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**THE BLUE MOUNTAINS** — The Ontario government is investing more than \$10 million to build five new state-of-the-art training facilities and train thousands of firefighters for in-demand careers in fire and rescue services.

“Investments in firefighter training are investments in the safety and resilience of our communities,” said Premier Doug Ford. “This new funding will help ensure that our firefighters have the skills and resources they need to protect people and communities and return home safely to their families.”

Ontario is investing over \$9 million to build five new training centres through the capital stream of the province’s Skills Development Fund (SDF). Once built, the five new training centres will have the capacity to train more than 28,000 firefighters over a five-year period, helping to meet the emergency response needs of growing communities across Ontario and allowing local firefighters to get the training they need closer to home.

In partnership with the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA), the province is also investing approximately \$970,000 in a training project that will provide Fire Ground Survival training to firefighters across the Niagara, Toronto and Kingston regions. As well, the Town of Georgina will receive provincial support to train and upskill its volunteer firefighters.

“Our firefighters are true heroes who face danger head-on and without hesitation to protect our communities,” said David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. “By investing in these projects, we’re helping to ensure our firefighters have the training they need to keep both themselves and others safe. By expanding training capacity, we’re opening doors for more people who want to become firefighters and protect our communities.”

The new training and infrastructure funding will be allocated to organizations and municipalities as follows:

- **Town of Georgina:** \$550,436 to support the construction of a new Fire & Rescue Training Facility.
- **Town of Orangeville:** \$3,667,650 to support the construction of a new Fire Services Campus to replace the existing building to train members of Orangeville Fire.
- **Town of Newmarket:** \$865,046 to support the construction of a new fire training facility in Aurora.
- **Municipality of Clarington:** \$3,216,384 to support the construction of a new fire training complex to help meet the community's emergency response needs and provides effective training for future leaders in the fire department.
- **Town of Hanover:** \$780,331 to support the construction of a new fire hall to support local training of the Hanover Fire and Rescue.
- **Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association Fire Ground Survival Train-the-Trainer Program:** \$970,150 to deliver fire ground survival training to career firefighters across the regions of Niagara, Toronto and Kingston.
- **Town of Georgina – Community Safety Skills Development for Georgina Fire & Rescue Services:** \$439,373 to deliver training to its volunteer firefighters in the Town of Georgina.

Ontario invests more than \$1 billion each year in employment services and training programs like [Better Jobs Ontario](#) and the [Skills Development Fund Training Stream](#) to help workers train for well-paying and meaningful careers in their communities. These investments are part of the government's ongoing efforts to attract, support and protect workers, making Ontario the best place to work, live and raise a family.

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#### Quick Facts

- Through the Skills Development Fund, Ontario is investing nearly \$1.1 billion to support training and upskilling programs for workers and connect jobseekers with employers to land well-paying careers close to home.
- Since its launch in 2021, Ontario's Skills Development Fund Training Stream has helped connect more than half a million jobseekers with the skills and training they need to find well-paying and fulfilling careers close to home.
- The Skills Development Fund Capital Stream was launched in June 2023 to provide funding to eligible organizations to build new training centres, upgrade existing training centres or convert an existing building into a training centre. These centres will train people for emerging and in-demand jobs in critical sectors of Ontario's economy.

- There are about 30,000 firefighters in Ontario, including about 12,000 full-time firefighters, nearly 19,000 volunteer firefighters and more than 400 part-time firefighters.
- The Skills Development Fund Training Stream is supported through labour market transfer agreements between the Government of Canada and the Government of Ontario.

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## Quotes

"Professional development and capacity building are core value propositions the OPFFA offers its members. Historically, the focus for firefighters is on training to extinguish fires and save lives but there hasn't been adequate training on firefighter survival. With the support of government funding, not only will more firefighters be trained on these vital life-saving skills, but they will also be able to bring it back to their local fire services, many of which face financial and geographical barriers in accessing training programs like Fire Ground Survival (FGS). We are incredibly grateful to this government for continuing to support and value the safety of our members."

**- Greg Horton**

**President of the Ontario Professional Fire Fighters Association (OPFFA)**

"This exciting investment will support Clarington firefighters in their work to protect the community and save lives. A new training complex will help Clarington continue to deliver high-quality fire and emergency response services to our rapidly growing municipality. I want to thank the province for championing opportunities for high-quality firefighter training."

**- Adrian Foster**

**Mayor of Clarington**

"This investment in the training area and components of Hanover's new firehall will ensure our volunteer Fire and Rescue team can acquire and practice the skills and knowledge required to prepare for, complete testing and maintain provincial standards and certifications."

**- Sue Paterson**

**Mayor of Hanover**



"This is an investment in the safety of our communities. The more training we can provide to our firefighters, the safer they will be when called upon to respond to emergencies and the more effective they will be in overcoming whatever challenges they face, which makes our communities safer. Thank you to the provincial government for partnering with Newmarket and Central York Fire Services to build a new firefighter training facility and increasing our capacity to train firefighters, here in the communities they protect."

- John Taylor  
Mayor of Newmarket

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### Additional Resources

- [Skills Development Fund Training Stream](#)
- [Skills Development Fund Capital Stream](#)

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### Related Topics

#### Jobs and Employment

We've got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers.

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## Ontario Exploring New Technology to Build Critical Infrastructure Faster

'Digital twins' can help improve worker safety, save taxpayer dollars and support economic growth

June 25, 2024

[Infrastructure](#)

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is testing the application and benefits of digital modelling technology, known as digital twins, to help deliver key infrastructure projects such as hospitals, highways and transit on time and on budget.

"Our government is exploring innovative new technologies to help build critical infrastructure faster and more cost-effectively," said Kinga Surma, Minister of Infrastructure. "From start to finish, digital twins will help ensure that project partners involved in the building process have access to timely, accurate and state-of-the-art data to advance the delivery of Ontario's infrastructure for our growing communities."

Digital twins are virtual models of existing and planned assets that when mapped for construction projects, can be used to help identify and resolve problems before work begins. Using a digital twin for underground utilities, for example, can help reduce the risk of delays and cost overruns on projects.

The province has selected the Trillium Health Partners' [Peter Gilgan Mississauga Hospital redevelopment](#), the [Ontario Place rebuild](#) and the [Eglinton Crosstown West Extension](#) to test the digital modelling technology. These projects were chosen because of their complex utility systems such as existing and planned electrical, water, gas and wastewater services. By identifying and mapping the location of these underground utilities in a virtual model, the province can help avoid costly and dangerous utility conflicts, which will help improve worker safety, save money and ensure projects are completed on time.

Ontario is investing over \$190 billion in key infrastructure projects over the next 10 years, as part of the [Building a Better Ontario: 2024 Ontario Budget](#).

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## Quick Facts

- Ontario is investing \$5 million to test the application and benefits of digital twins.
- Infrastructure Ontario is partnering with local and global organizations, including [Toronto Metropolitan University](#) and the [United Kingdom's Geospatial Commission](#), to leverage their experience with digital twins and explore solutions to help modernize the delivery of public infrastructure.
- The City of Toronto and York Region are using digital twins to monitor wear and tear on water infrastructure in real-time to support better decision-making and allocation of public resources.
- The City of Ottawa is leveraging aerial data collection and 3D mapping technology which could be used in digital modelling to enhance its urban planning and asset management programs.

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## Additional Resources

- [Building a Better Ontario: 2024 Ontario Budget](#)
- [Learn more about digital twins with Minister Kinga Surma](#)

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## Ontario Begins Automatic Licence Plate Renewals

Province saving vehicle owners time and money

June 26, 2024

[Transportation](#)

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HAMILTON — The Ontario government is making life easier and more convenient for more than eight million drivers by becoming the first jurisdiction in North America to introduce automatic licence plate renewals. The change takes effect on July 1, 2024 and will save vehicle owners time, amounting to more than 900,000 hours every year.

"Under the leadership of Premier Ford, our government is making life more affordable and convenient for drivers," said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation. "First, we eliminated licence plate sticker fees for passenger vehicles, saving drivers \$120 a year for every car they own. Now, we're saving drivers valuable time and making their lives easier by automatically renewing licence plates."

Licence plates for passenger vehicles, light-duty trucks, motorcycles and mopeds will renew automatically 90 days before expiry if the vehicle owner has valid insurance and no outstanding fines or tolls. If a licence plate cannot be renewed automatically, the vehicle owner will be notified and required to manually renew online or in person at ServiceOntario.

"The automatic licence plate renewal program stems from our government's unwavering commitment to deliver modern, seamless and time-saving services," said Todd McCarthy, Minister of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement. "By utilizing innovative technological solutions to streamline and improve government services, we are saving Ontarians precious time and money."

Until automatic licence plate renewals take effect, vehicle owners are required to manually renew their plates at no cost. Ontarians can check their licence plate status at [ontario.ca/platerenewal](https://ontario.ca/platerenewal).

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## Quick Facts

- Vehicle owners can ensure they do not miss digital notifications about issues related to automatic renewal by signing up for ServiceOntario reminders at <https://reminders.ontario.ca/en> or 1-800-387-3445.
- Vehicle owners who have signed up for ServiceOntario digital notifications will be sent notifications through email, text, or voicemail if their licence plates cannot be renewed at 90, 45, and 10 days before expiry, and again at 72 hours after expiry.
- Vehicle owners who have not signed up for digital notifications will be sent paper notifications by mail 90 days before expiry and 72 hours after expiry.
- In 2022, the Ontario government [eliminated licence plate sticker fees and stickers for passenger vehicles](#), saving drivers up to \$120 a year for every car they own.
- The introduction of automatic licence plate renewals will not change the way the province, municipalities or the 407 ETR collect unpaid fines and tolls.
- In May 2024, the [Get It Done Act](#) received Royal Assent allowing for the transition to automatic renewal of licence plates.

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## Quotes

"Automatic licence plate renewals are part of our government's plan to make life easier and more convenient for Ontarians. We will always work to remove red tape and make services more accessible to all."

- Donna Skelly  
MPP for Flamborough-Glanbrook

"Providing automatic licence plate renewals underscores this government's commitment to modernizing services. Removing the yearly hassle of reporting to the government saves people and businesses a precious commodity – their time. Ontario's 1,100 new car and truck retailers applaud Premier Ford and his government for driving efficiencies and removing unnecessary bureaucracy for vehicle owners."

- Frank Notte  
Director of Government Relations, Motor Vehicle Retailers of Ontario

"Insurance Bureau of Canada applauds the government's continued efforts to make it easier and more convenient for Ontario drivers to access the services they need and is pleased to support the implementation of automatic license plate renewals."

- Amanda Dean  
Vice-President, Ontario and Atlantic, Insurance Bureau of Canada

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### Additional Resources

[Renew your licence plate](#)

[Change your address](#)

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### Related Topics

#### Driving and Roads

Information about road conditions, driver's licences, vehicle registration and commercial vehicles. [Learn more](#)

#### Jobs and Employment

We've got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers. [Learn more](#)

#### Travel and Recreation

Learn more about hunting and fishing, provincial parks, festivals and events, and visiting Ontario. [Learn more](#)

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## Ontario Investing in Mental Health Training to Support Police

\$2.7 million investment will support thousands of police officers and civilian employees

June 27, 2024

[Office of the Premier](#)

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**MISSISSAUGA** —The Ontario government is investing \$2.7 million through the Skills Development Fund (SDF) Training Stream to support an innovative project that will train approximately 160 Peer Support Workers to provide better mental health supports to thousands of police officers across Ontario, including over 2,000 officers in Peel Region. This brings Ontario's total investment in skills development training through the SDF Training Stream to nearly \$1.1 billion.

"The brave men and women in our police services put their lives on the line to keep Ontario communities safe and our government is proud to support them," said Premier Doug Ford. "This investment through our Skills Development Fund will provide critical mental health support for our men and women in uniform to help them face the significant challenges and occupational stress that come with the job."

This investment will be used to support a project led by Get A-Head Inc. that will introduce a new digital platform to help police peer support workers provide mental health care to police services colleagues and their families. Using cutting-edge technology like artificial intelligence, this new platform will make it easier for peer support workers to identify colleagues in distress and deliver care better tailored to their needs, while automating routine organizational tasks to allow them to spend more time supporting their colleagues.

The project will also provide current and future peer support workers with standardized skills training that will prepare them to provide an enhanced quality of care.

"Our police officers put their lives on the line daily to serve and protect the people of Ontario. We know this can lead to trauma and mental health challenges for these heroes. Just as they are there for us, we need to be there for them," said

David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development. "By investing in training and upskilling for police peer support workers, we are helping to make sure they have the latest tools to provide the best mental health support to our first responders."

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### Quick Facts

- Through the SDF Training Stream, Ontario is investing nearly \$1.1 billion to support training and upskilling programs for workers and connect jobseekers with employers to land well-paying careers close to home.
  - Since its launch in 2021, Ontario's SDF Training Stream has helped almost 600,000 workers train for in-demand sectors.
  - More than 420,000 of these participants are from an underrepresented group such as women, youth, persons with disabilities and Indigenous peoples.
  - The SDF Training Stream is supported through labour market transfer agreements between the Government of Canada and Government of Ontario.
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### Quotes

"Peel Regional Police appreciates the Government of Ontario's investment into supports for first responders. We are pleased to participate in initiatives that support our members' mental health and well-being and to contribute to the work that Keel Digital Solution Mind and Get A-Head are doing. The investment through the Skills Development Fund will support their ability to develop an accessible platform for police services to better support their members."

**- Chief Nishan Duraiappah  
Peel Regional Police**

"This investment in mental health support through the Skills Development Fund is an important step for Peel. This initiative will enhance the mental well-being of those who serve and protect our community. By leveraging artificial intelligence and digital platforms, this project ensures personalized and efficient mental health care, significantly benefiting thousands of police officers and civilian employees as well as their families."

**- Nando Iannicca  
Chair, Peel Region**

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## Additional Resources

- [Skills Development Fund Training Stream](#)
- [Skills Development Fund Capital Stream](#)
- [Employment Ontario: Free Programs and Services for Job Seekers, Workers and Employers](#)
- [Skilled Trades Ontario](#)

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## Related Topics

### Education and Training

Learn about Ontario's early years, education and training systems. Includes information on child care, elementary schools, secondary schools, colleges, universities, skills training and financial aid. [Learn more](#)

### Jobs and Employment

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## Ontario Consulting on Expanding Role of Nurse Practitioners

Expanding scope of practice would make it faster and more convenient for people to access care

June 27, 2024

[Health](#)

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is starting consultations with the College of Nurses of Ontario and other health care partners on expanding the scope of practice for nurse practitioners. Allowing nurse practitioners to better use their training, skills and education will help Ontarians connect to more convenient care and help free up more time for physicians to spend caring for patients with more complicated needs.

“Our government is continuing to use every tool in our toolbox to ensure people have access to the care they need, when they need it,” said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. “By considering changes to allow nurse practitioners to provide more care to their patients, we will connect more people to convenient primary care, while reducing the need for referrals to other providers.”

Proposed changes include:

- providing faster care for someone in cardiac arrest by allowing nurse practitioners to order and apply a defibrillator, which provides an electric shock to help restore a person’s regular heartbeat.
- making it faster for people to receive care if their heart isn’t beating regularly by allowing nurse practitioners to order and apply cardiac pacemaker therapy.
- help people with skin conditions and lesions such as skin tags get them removed faster by allowing nurse practitioners to order and perform electrocoagulation.
- complete and sign mandatory blood testing forms for specific infectious diseases.

The government is also consulting on changes that would improve the end-of-life experience for families after the death of a loved one by allowing nurse practitioners to certify death in all circumstances, as well as allowing registered

nurses to certify death when the death has been expected. This will help ensure deaths are certified in a timely manner to preserve dignity for the deceased and their families.

As part of the [Your Health](#) plan, the Ontario government is making it easier for highly skilled, regulated health care professionals, including nurse practitioners and registered nurses, to work to the full extent of their training and expertise to better serve the needs of people in a connected and convenient manner.

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#### Quick Facts

- The College of Nurses of Ontario will continue to support patient safety and quality of care by providing practice standards and setting training and education requirements, to ensure nurse practitioners and registered nurses in Ontario have the knowledge, skill and judgment needed to deliver safe patient care.
  - Since 2018, Ontario has seen a record-breaking number of new health care professionals join the workforce, adding 80,000 new nurses with another 30,000 nurses currently studying at Ontario colleges and universities.
  - Since [expanding the role of registered nurses to prescribe medications](#), 122 registered nurses have been authorized to prescribe, after meeting specific requirements, with close to 900 others in the process of meeting education requirements for RN prescribing.
- 

#### Quotes

"CNO's purpose is to protect the public by promoting safe nursing practice for all nurses: Registered Practical Nurses, Registered Nurses and Nurse Practitioners. Our role includes communicating to nurses and others the professional accountabilities for safe patient care, and CNO is pleased to be a key partner in ensuring that any changes to nursing practice are implemented safely. We encourage the public and system partners to take part and share their perspectives on this important consultation."

- **Silvie Crawford**

**Registrar/Executive Director & CEO, College of Nurses of Ontario**

"NPAO applauds the government's initiative to expand nurse practitioners' scope of practice. These changes will enhance our ability to provide timely and comprehensive care, improving access for all Ontarians. By leveraging the full extent of our training and expertise, nurse practitioners can play a crucial role in ensuring a more integrated health system in Ontario."

- Dr. Michelle Acorn  
CEO of the Nurse Practitioners' Association of Ontario (NPAO)

"Efforts to expand the scope of practice of nurse practitioners (NPs) are both welcome and necessary. We're pleased the government is acting on RNAO's advice because as NPs we want and we can do more to help Ontarians with their health needs. With over two million people lacking regular access to a primary care provider, we have the education and the experience to close access gaps and deliver quality care."

- NP Lhamo Dolkar  
President, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO)

"These changes will lead to a better functioning health system, faster care, and improved outcomes for persons in primary care, in long-term care, and anywhere else NPs work. An expanded scope for NPs and RN prescribing are game changers for Ontarians."

- Dr. Doris Grinspun  
CEO, Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO)

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## Additional Resources

- [Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care](#)
- [2024 Ontario Budget: Building a Better Ontario](#)

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## Related Topics

### Government

Learn about the government services available to you and how government works.

[Learn more](#)

### Health and Wellness

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## Province Investing in Hydroelectric Energy in Eastern Ontario

Refurbishments will create 500 good-paying jobs and provide reliable, affordable and clean energy to power growth

June 27, 2024

[Energy and Electrification](#)

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**OTTAWA** – The Ontario government is expanding and refurbishing clean electricity generation by announcing support for Ontario Power Generation’s (OPG) approximately \$1 billion investment to refurbish eight hydroelectric generating stations in Eastern Ontario. This infrastructure program would secure 1,617 megawatts (MW) of clean electricity generation, equivalent to powering 1.6 million homes, helping to meet increasing demand from electrification and fueling the province’s growth.

“Hydroelectric generating stations in Eastern Ontario have been providing the province with clean electricity for a century, and with today’s investment, we’re extending the life of these eight stations for decades more to help Ontario meet its growing electricity needs,” said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Energy and Electrification. “This investment and expansion – part of our Powering Ontario’s Growth plan - will create 500 new good-paying jobs and ensure families in Ottawa and Eastern Ontario have access to affordable power now and into the future. Our government will continue to support affordable energy expansion, while continuing to oppose the regressive federal carbon tax.”

Through this investment OPG will refurbish 45 units at eight generating stations: the Arnprior, Barrett Chute, Mountain Chute, Stewartville, Chats Falls, Chenaux, Des Joachims, and Otto Holden stations. The work includes major rehabilitation of generating equipment to increase production. Once completed, the stations are expected to produce up to 100 gigawatt hours of additional clean electricity each year, equivalent to powering over 11,000 homes.

The work will create more than 500 highly skilled and well-paid jobs across Eastern Ontario. Along with OPG’s recent investment of more than \$600 million to [refurbish the R.H. Saunders Generating Station](#), Ontario is investing close to \$1.6 billion in

Eastern Ontario hydroelectricity refurbishments to secure up to 2,673 MW of clean electricity.

"The beauty of renewable hydro power is its durability and flexibility. It also plays a valuable role ensuring grid reliability," said Heather Ferguson, SVP of Business Development and Corporate Affairs at Ontario Power Generation. "This significant investment will enhance efficiencies, create hundreds of skilled jobs in Eastern Ontario, and ensure our stations meet energy demands for decades to come."

"This critical investment in our people and communities will bring good-paying jobs to the Ottawa region while ensuring the hydro stations' legacy of supplying clean power for another 30 years," said Goldie Ghamari, MPP Carleton. "These refurbishments will help secure clean, green power we need to fuel our growing economy and support the hardworking families of this region."

This investment in Ontario's hydroelectric fleet is just one part of [Powering Ontario's Growth](#), the government's pragmatic plan which outlines the actions the province is taking, subject to receiving all necessary approvals, to meet growing energy demand and reduce emissions by expanding Ontario's reliable, affordable and clean grid, including:

- **Nuclear Energy** – Advancing reliable, affordable and clean nuclear power through [pre-development work](#) for new large-scale nuclear at the Bruce Power site, planning and licensing for [four small modular reactors at Darlington](#) and supporting OPG's plan to proceed with next steps toward [refurbishing the Pickering Nuclear Generation Station](#).
- **Competitive Procurements** – [Acquiring 4,000 MW of electricity generation and storage](#) and planning more competitive procurements for electricity resources.
- **New Transmission Infrastructure** – Designating and prioritizing transmission lines in [Southwestern, Northeastern and Eastern Ontario](#) that will power job creators including EV and EV battery manufacturing and clean steel production.
- **Keeping Costs Down** – Launching new energy efficiency programs on January 1, 2025, building on the government's [\\$342 million expansion of existing energy efficiency programs](#) which are helping families and businesses reduce their electricity use so they can save money on their energy bills.

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#### Quick Facts

- Ontario's grid is one of the cleanest in the world with a diverse supply mix made up of nuclear, hydroelectric, natural gas, wind, solar and bioenergy.
- The Arnprior, Barrett Chute, Mountain Chute, and Stewartville generating stations are located on the Madawaska River.

- The Chats Falls, Chenaux, Des Joachims and Otto Holden generating stations are located on the Ottawa River.

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## Additional Resources

[Powering Ontario's Growth](#)

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## Related Topics

### Environment and Energy

Learn more about how Ontario protects and restores wildlife and the environment. Includes information on conservation and the electricity system. [Learn more](#)

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# Ontario Launching New Certification for Towing Industry

Province protecting drivers from fraudulent towing companies

June 28, 2024

[Transportation](#)

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TORONTO — The Ontario government is increasing safety, supporting customers and improving standards in the towing industry. Effective July 1, 2024, Ontario will become the first province in Canada to require both tow truck drivers and vehicle storage operators to have a certificate to operate, helping protect drivers against fraudulent towing companies.

“While the vast majority of Ontario’s towing industry operates in good faith, bad actors have preyed on vulnerable drivers for too long,” said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation. “That is why our government is helping to level the playing field, giving people confidence and peace of mind when they need help at the side of the road.”

Among the new protections, consumers will be able to choose the company that tows their vehicle (unless directed by police) and request a driver’s proof of certificate. In addition, tow truck drivers will be required to provide information on the maximum fees (rate) they are permitted to charge and take the customer’s vehicle to the desired location using the most direct route.

To receive or maintain a towing certificate, tow truck drivers will be required to complete a mandatory training program and complete a criminal record check. Drivers found operating without appropriate credentials will face fines, possible vehicle impoundment and risk forfeiting future certification.

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## Quick Facts

- More than 300,000 people in Ontario have their vehicles towed each year.
- Tow truck operators’ certificate status, along with rates, can be verified by visiting the [ministry’s online portal](#).
- Tow truck drivers who have applied for certification before July 1, 2024, have three years from their application date to complete training and will be prompted at the time of renewal (in year three) to provide proof of training.

- Towers who apply for a certificate on or after July 1, 2024, must complete mandatory training requirements from the Ministry of Transportation before submitting their application.
- Tow and vehicle storage operators have needed a certificate to operate in Ontario since the *Towing and Storage Safety and Enforcement Act, 2021* came into force on January 1, 2024.

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### Additional Resources

[Know your rights when getting a tow](#)

[Get a towing or vehicle storage certificate](#)

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### Related Topics

#### Driving and Roads

Information about road conditions, driver's licences, vehicle registration and commercial vehicles. [Learn more](#)

#### Jobs and Employment

We've got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers.

[Learn more](#)

#### Travel and Recreation

Learn more about hunting and fishing, provincial parks, festivals and events, and visiting Ontario. [Learn more](#)

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## Regulations and Statutes in Force as of July 1, 2024

June 28, 2024

[Office of the Premier](#)

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The following legislation, regulation and fee changes will be in effect July 1, 2024. They are listed by responsible ministry.

### Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness\*

Ontario is strengthening and modernizing the agriculture sector by updating the *Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario Act* (ARIO) and renaming it the *Agricultural Research and Innovation Ontario Act*. The name change reflects Ontario's commitment to advancing agri-food research and innovation to ensure continued advancement in the agriculture, food and agribusiness industries.

The Ontario government is streamlining a verification process for farmers and livestock businesses. A regulation under the *Nutrient Management Act, 2002* (O. Reg. 106/09) has been amended to update the process for getting a verification certificate for incinerators so farmers and businesses can show that the incinerators they use are meeting performance standards. Regulatory requirements to ensure that human health and the environment are protected remain in place.

*\*Ministry formerly known as the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs*

### Ministry of the Attorney General

The Ontario government is helping to attract more contract bids on major infrastructure projects and avoid unnecessary costs in order to deliver projects more efficiently. A regulation under the *Construction Act* will adjust the minimum bonding requirements for large public infrastructure projects that do not involve private financing. The government is also adjusting mandatory minimum bonding requirements for large public projects to help prevent delays and cost escalation.

Ontario is reducing the backlog in the Superior Court of Justice and ensuring judicial resources can be applied to more serious matters by bringing into force legislative amendments that will prevent plaintiffs from suing for money or

personal property in the Superior Court if their claim is up to \$35,000 and in all other respects falls within the jurisdiction of the Small Claims Court (unless the court gives special permission). The Civil Rules Committee has also made new civil court rules to support these amendments and the Attorney General approved the new rules. The new rules are made by regulation.

The availability of bifurcation orders has also been expanded by new rules made by the Civil Rules Committee and approved by the Attorney General (in the form of a regulation). Bifurcation orders allow trials and other hearings to be split into two shorter trials or hearings, saving court time and making processes more efficient.

The government is amending a regulation under the *Cannabis Licence Act, 2018* to make it easier for some licensed cannabis retail stores to use premises that include spaces shared with other businesses, such as common washrooms and hallways.

### **Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services**

Under the [Supporting Children's Futures Act, 2024](#), Ontario is making amendments to the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* and the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998* that modernize and standardize important safeguards throughout the child and youth services sector.

Amendments to the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* clarify that service providers such as children's aid societies can share personal information with the College of Early Childhood Educators and Ontario College of Teachers to support proceedings such as complaints and investigations. Amendments also clarify that early childhood educators, similar to other professionals, may be subject to an offence if they fail to report to a society a child who is or may be in need of protection. Amendments also set out the right of a child in care to be informed about the Ombudsman, including their role and how they may be contacted. In addition, amendments clarify circumstances when children's aid societies or licensed out-of-home care providers must provide information about the Ombudsman to children and young persons.

To help further support the safety of children and youth, amendments to the *Social Work and Social Service Work Act, 1998* enable the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers to share information with other professional governing bodies such as a college governing social workers in another province. The amendments also allow the College to share information with other entities, including children's aid societies, in limited circumstances, such as to confirm when a social worker or social service worker is under investigation or to eliminate or reduce a serious risk of harm to a person or group of persons.

An amendment to O. Reg. 156/18: General Matters under the Authority of the Minister under the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017* updates the name, date and effective date of the policy directive related to the Youth Leaving Care Policy and the Ready, Set, Go Program, which was amended to include data collection and ministry reporting requirements.

### **Ministry of Citizenship and Multiculturalism**

As part of the *Less Red Tape, More Common Sense Act, 2023*, the Ontario government is making amendments to the *Ontario Heritage Act* that will make it faster and easier for religious organizations and Indigenous communities to modify their municipally designated heritage properties when modifications are needed for religious practices. These changes will provide increased certainty for organizations, ensuring they can move forward with minor alterations more quickly when requirements are met, minimizing disruption and delay to their religious practices.

### **Ministry of Colleges and Universities**

An amendment to the regulations under the *Post-secondary Education Choice and Excellence Act, 2000* will allow publicly assisted colleges to apply for consent to offer master's degree programs in applied areas of study to help students graduate with in-demand skills, practical work experience and credentials. The amendment will also make housekeeping changes.

### **Ministry of Education**

Ontario is introducing time limits on school renewal funds to ensure that on-the-ground improvements to renew and improve schools are achieved in a timely manner.

Ontario is amending regulations under the *Education Act* to support a request by *Conseil scolaire de district catholique des Grandes Rivières* to change the school board's name. The board will now officially be *Conseil scolaire catholique des Grandes Rivières*, assisting the school board to adopt a legal name that better reflects the community's vision and identity.

To build on Ontario's efforts to introduce more affordable, accessible child care, amendments under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* are helping licensees hire people with a range of qualifications and credentials and are providing child care licensees with greater flexibility to staff their programs for children aged six years and up. With alternatives to Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) in programs for children aged six and older, RECEs can focus on delivering care and programming to younger children, better utilizing their specialized training.

## **Ministry of Energy and Electrification\***

As part of the government's ongoing work to keep energy costs down and cut red tape to get more homes and transit built, Ontario introduced the *Keeping Energy Costs Down Act, 2024*. Regulatory amendments enabled by this legislation empower the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) to exempt new pipelines with an estimated cost between \$2 million and \$10 million from requiring leave-to-construct approval where the OEB determines that the Crown's duty to consult, if triggered, has been adequately discharged. This is in response to municipalities and municipal and agricultural organizations which have raised concerns that the \$2 million threshold for small pipeline projects, first set in regulation in 2003, has not been updated to reflect inflation and increased construction costs. Projects under \$2 million are already exempt from the OEB's leave-to-construct processes.

In December 2023, the OEB issued a split decision which would increase the upfront cost to consumers of installing natural gas connections for new homes and small businesses by thousands of dollars. A new regulation will prevent this upfront cost increase by reinstating the "revenue horizon" for new residential and small commercial natural gas connections to 40 years.

*\*Ministry formerly known as the Ministry of Energy*

## **Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks**

The Ontario government is amending a regulation under *the Provincial Parks and Conservation Reserves Act* to establish the province's first urban provincial park, Uxbridge Urban Provincial Park, in the Township of Uxbridge, adding to Ontario's system of protected areas and providing more recreational opportunities for people living in or near the Greater Toronto Area.

Regulations made under the *Environmental Protection Act* in 2022 establish requirements for sulphur dioxide air emissions from petroleum facilities. Certain requirements take effect on July 1, 2024, including a requirement for facilities to operate Continuous Monitoring Systems.

## **Ministry of Finance**

The Ontario government is helping more seniors in need receive financial assistance by amending the *Guaranteed Annual Income System (GAINS) Act*. Benefits under the GAINS program will be indexed to inflation and the reduction rate decreased from 50 per cent to 25 per cent. These changes will raise the private income threshold for GAINS, making about 100,000 more seniors eligible for the program.

The Ontario government is also amending a regulation under the *Tobacco Tax Act* (Reg. 1034) to extend the filing date for tobacco tax returns to the 28th day of each month, as requested by registered importers and tobacco collectors.

## **Ministry of Health**

The government is ensuring people can connect to high-quality care by working with health regulatory colleges to change professional misconduct regulations under the *Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Act*, the *Denturism Act*, the *Massage Therapy Act*, the *Midwifery Act*, and the *Opticianry Act*. Amendments to these regulations update requirements for providers to obtain consent from patients or their authorized representatives for providing healthcare services, establish stronger enforcement for inappropriate behaviour and improve accountability around patient fees.

New or amended regulations made by the health regulatory colleges under the *Massage Therapy Act*, the *Medical Radiation and Imaging Technology Act* and the *Opticianry Act* will better align education accreditation and other registration requirements with existing requirements that are common to many other Ontario health regulatory colleges.

As Ontario continues its transition to post-pandemic recovery, amendments to regulations under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* (O. Reg. 135/18 and Regulation 569) will remove COVID-19 from the list of diseases identified as being caused by a novel coronavirus, while still maintaining it as a Disease of Public Health Significance (DOPHS), better aligning it with seasonal flu. This will reduce the reporting required by health care professionals and public health units, while still requiring reports of outbreaks in specified institutions and hospitals and death data.

New changes under the *Psychology and Applied Behaviour Analysis Act, 2021* establish behaviour analysts as a new regulated health profession in Ontario under the renamed College of Psychologists and Behaviour Analysts of Ontario. These changes incorporate new regulations pertaining to registration requirements, as well as implement a quality assurance program and add misconduct provisions for the new profession. New amendments also create an emergency class of registration that would enable quicker registration of behaviour analysts, psychologists and psychological associates during emergency circumstances.

## **Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development**

To better protect vulnerable workers, including temporary foreign workers in the province, Ontario is amending the *Employment Standards Act, 2000* to improve regulation of temporary help agencies and recruiters operating in the province and require them to be licensed. Employers, prospective employers, other recruiters and clients will be prohibited from knowingly engaging or using unlicensed entities.

Ontario is also amending regulations under the *Ontario Immigration Act, 2015* to make changes to the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program (OINP) and expand the list of eligible occupations for the Employer Job Offer: In-Demand Skills stream from 34 to 56. To prevent potential misuse of the program, the minimum Administrative Monetary Penalty that will be issued when fraud is found from employers, representatives, recruiters, or those who acquire a financial benefit from fraud, will rise from \$2,000 to \$10,000. To help address the need for health human resources in the province, Ontario is waiving the minimum education requirement for the OINP's Express Entry Human Capital Priorities and Express Entry French-Speaking Skilled Worker streams for individuals in specific nursing occupations, if registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario.

### **Ministry of Long-Term Care**

Ontario is making changes to Ontario Regulation 246/22 under the *Fixing Long-Term Care Act, 2021* to help long-term care homes better address staffing needs so residents can continue to connect to the care they need. New amendments will reduce barriers for qualified health care professionals to work in the long-term care sector to the full scope of their abilities, including allowing nursing student externs to perform certain tasks in long-term care homes such as administering drugs. The amendments will also provide LTC licensees with more clarity around visitor access during emergency situations, revoke certain pandemic provisions and offer more flexibility around plans for the closure and replacement of LTC homes.

### **Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing**

To reduce red tape, offer more flexibility to municipalities and speed up planning processes, the government is amending several regulations under the *Planning Act* and a regulation under the *Development Charges Act, 1997*. Changes include identifying additional municipalities whose planning does not require provincial approval, enabling municipalities in certain circumstances to inform residents of new planning applications, community benefits charge by-laws, parkland dedication by-laws and development charge matters via their municipal website and establishing a specific time period for a municipality to review new evidence introduced at an Ontario Land Tribunal hearing in regard to subdivisions.



Amendments under the *Housing Services Act, 2011* will provide an exemption from the *Land Transfer Tax Act* for the transfer of a co-operative housing property in Kanata to non-profit housing providers. The effective date aligns with the closing date of the property transfer.

### **Ministry of Natural Resources\***

The government is making changes to regulation under the *Crown Forest Sustainability Act, 1994* to enact the 2024 versions of three updated Forest Manuals: The Forest Management Planning Manual, the Forest Information Manual and the Scaling Manual. These changes help modernize and streamline forest management planning and wood measurement processes in Ontario.

*\*Ministry formerly known as the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry*

### **Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery and Procurement**

Ontario is modernizing the Electrical Safety Authority's (ESA) Licensing Requirements under the *Electricity Act, 1998* to make it easier for electrical contractors and master electricians to renew their licences by removing requirements to apply for renewal 30 days before expiration and simplifying renewal applications to remove the distinction between those received before or after 14 days past the expiry date. Additionally, the requirements that all master electricians provide a copy of their certificate of qualification when renewing their licence will be removed as the ESA can verify the information quickly and directly with online registries. Provisions are also being added to clarify ESA's authority to request information from licensees to verify compliance with the Act and its regulations. This will allow ESA to address complaints and cases of non-compliance more efficiently and directly.

Ontario is reducing the regulatory burden for the motor vehicle sales sector. Regulatory amendments under the *Motor Vehicle Dealers Act, 2002* extend the time for registrants to provide warranty documents and payments, remove the requirement for motor vehicle dealers and salespersons to return their registration certificate when they are no longer registered and simplify the requirement to provide contact information in advertisements.

The changes will also enhance the Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council's (OMVIC's) governance through the prohibition of cross-appointments between OMVIC's Board of Directors and the Motor Vehicle Dealers Compensation Fund (MVDCF) Board of Trustees.

*\*Ministry formerly known as the Ministry of Public and Business Service Delivery*

## Ministry of Transportation

With amendments to the *Highway Traffic Act* and a regulation under the *Provincial Offences Act*, Ontario is making life easier and more convenient for more than eight million vehicle owners by becoming the first jurisdiction in Canada to introduce automatic licence plate renewals, saving vehicle owners more than 900,000 hours every year. To help make life more affordable for Ontarians the province is also cancelling the July 1, 2024, and July 1, 2025, Consumer Price Index (CPI) fee increases for various knowledge and road tests and driver instructor fees.

Additional amendments to the *Highway Traffic Act* will harmonize with federal requirements by exempting commercial motor vehicles, conducting tow-away operations of recreational vehicles, from provincial Electronic Logging Device requirements, allowing for alternate formats like a paper-based log.

Amendments to the *Towing and Storage Safety and Enforcement Act* will make Ontario the first province in Canada to require tow truck operators and vehicle storage operators to have a certificate to operate in Ontario, helping protect drivers against fraudulent towing companies.

An additional amendment came into force in June that allows the towing industry to charge for highway cleanup when performing a basic tow as required to ensure roadways stay clean.

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### Related Topics

#### Government

Learn about the government services available to you and how government works.

[Learn more](#)

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# Ontario Capping Rent Increases at the Lowest Rate in Canada

June 28, 2024

[Municipal Affairs and Housing](#)

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TORONTO — Ontario is holding the annual rent increase guideline for 2025 at 2.5 per cent. This is currently the lowest rate in the country and below the average inflation rate of 3.1 per cent. The rent increase guideline is the maximum amount a landlord can increase rent during the year for most tenants without the approval of the Landlord and Tenant Board.

The guideline is based on Ontario's Consumer Price Index, a measure of inflation calculated by Statistics Canada using data that reflects economic conditions over the past year. Under the *Residential Tenancies Act*, the guideline is capped at 2.5 per cent to help protect tenants from rising interest rates that would result in higher rent. Without the cap, the recent rate of inflation would have resulted in an increase of 3.1 per cent in 2025.

Rent increases are not automatic or mandatory. Landlords may raise rent only if they give tenants at least 90 days' written notice using the [correct form](#). At least 12 months must have passed since the first day of the tenancy or the last rent increase. If a tenant believes they have received an improper rent increase, they can apply to the [Landlord and Tenant Board](#) to request a correction.

Over the last three years, Ontario has seen the highest housing starts and rental housing starts in over three decades.

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## Quick Facts

- The rent increase guideline applies to the vast majority of rental households — approximately 1.4 million — covered by the *Residential Tenancies Act*. It does not apply to rental units occupied for the first time after November 15, 2018, vacant residential units, community housing, long-term care homes or commercial properties.
- In most cases, the rent increase cannot be more than the rent increase guideline. Landlords can apply to the [Landlord and Tenant Board for above-](#)

[guideline rent increases](#), under certain circumstances, such as after eligible capital work has been paid for and finished.

- Tenants who may need help to pay their rent are encouraged to contact their local [service manager](#) to see what housing supports are available in their community.
- Ontario has the highest maximum fines in Canada for residential tenancy offences.

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### Additional Resources

- Learn more about [renting in Ontario](#) and your rights as a tenant, including easy-to-understand rental leases and protections against wrongful or bad faith evictions.
- Learn about [the rules for rent increases](#), including rent increase guidelines and resolving issues about rent control.
- Use [Navigate Tribunals Ontario](#) to learn about your rights and responsibilities and the rules and processes at the Landlord and Tenant Board.
- [Visit Ontario's website for information on how to solve a disagreement with your landlord or tenant](#), and learn how we can help if a landlord or tenant breaks a rule under the *Residential Tenancies Act*.

---

### Related Topics

#### Government

Learn about the government services available to you and how government works.

[Learn more](#)

#### Home and Community

Information for families on major life events and care options, including marriage, births and child care. Also includes planning resources for municipalities. [Learn](#)

[more](#)

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## Ontario Making Electric Vehicle Chargers More Accessible

Province accepting applications to build charging stations in underserved and remote areas

July 03, 2024

[Transportation](#)

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TORONTO — The Ontario government has issued a Request for Bids to build and operate electric vehicle (EV) charging stations in 15 new underserved and remote areas across the province. Expanding the charging network will make it easier and more convenient for drivers to charge EVs outside of large urban centres, reducing range anxiety and supporting the electric vehicle manufacturing industry in Ontario.

“Ontario’s future is electric and our government is making it easier than ever to own and operate an EV in Ontario while attracting billions of dollars in investments and creating tens of thousands of well-paying jobs in the process,” said Prabmeet Sarkaria, Minister of Transportation. “We’re increasing access to electric vehicle charging stations – particularly in rural and northern communities – so we can help more drivers go electric with confidence.”

The province is accepting applications to build and operate publicly accessible charging stations on government-owned property, including highway rest areas, carpool parking lots and tourist destinations such as Ontario Parks. More than a dozen sites across the province – the majority being in northern Ontario – have been identified for the initial procurement, with the first EV chargers expected to be ready for use in 2025.

Through the EV ChargeON program, the Ontario government is investing \$91 million to make it easier to access EV chargers across the province and provide small, rural and Indigenous communities with the opportunity to switch to EVs. Currently, there are approximately 3,550 public EV charging stations with roughly 9,650 Level 2 and Level 3 (high-powered) EV charging ports in Ontario.

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## Quick Facts

- The following northern rest areas have been identified for charging stations: Argon Park Rest Area, Batchawana Tourist Information Centre, Marten River Rest Area, Ontario/Manitoba Border Rest Area, Ryland Rest Area, Klotz Lake Rest Area, Terrace Bay Rest Area and the Watershed Truck Rest Area.
- The following carpool lots have been identified for charging stations: Dwyer Hill Carpool Lot (East), Orangeville Carpool Lot (West) and Port Union Carpool Lot (Central).
- The following provincial parks have been identified for charging stations: Algonquin Provincial Park (North) – including EV chargers at both the Visitors' Centre and Portage Store, Pinery Provincial Park (West) and Sibbald Point Provincial Park (Central).
- The successful bidder will design and install the charging infrastructure and be responsible for its operation and maintenance for five years, with the possibility of two additional one-year extensions.
- The Request for Bids is available through the [Ontario Tenders Portal \(OTP\)](#), the electronic tendering system used by the Ontario government. Interested bidders have until August 13, 2024, to submit applications.
- The EV ChargeON program consists of two streams: the Community Sites Stream and the Government Sites Stream. Applications for the EV ChargeON Community Sites Stream closed in January 2024 and are currently under review.

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## Quotes

"As Ontario continues to build a fully integrated end-to-end EV supply chain and attract billions in EV-related investments from global automakers and suppliers, the EV ChargeON Program will play a key role in supporting workers and families across our province. By expanding access to public charging infrastructure and placing chargers where they are needed most, our government is accelerating EV adoption in Ontario and further boosting our auto sector's momentum."

- Vic Fedeli

Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade

"Expanding vehicle charging stations to Ontario Parks means more people will get to enjoy the great outdoors. Thanks to our clean electricity system, we are powering more EVs while protecting our environment and growing our economy."

- Andrea Khanjin  
Minister of the Environment, Conservation and Parks

"With more than 150,000 electric vehicles already on the road in Ontario, we're keeping electricity rates down while making charging more accessible across Ontario. Powered by our world-class clean electricity grid, these new chargers and Ontario's ultra-low overnight electricity rate will make it even more accessible and affordable for families in every part of our province to make the switch to an electric vehicle."

- Stephen Lecce  
Minister of Energy and Electrification

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### Additional Resources

[EV ChargeON program](#)

[Ultra-Low Overnight price plan](#)

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### Related Topics

#### Driving and Roads

Information about road conditions, driver's licences, vehicle registration and commercial vehicles. [Learn more](#)

#### Jobs and Employment

We've got the resource and supports to help connect job seekers with employers. [Learn more](#)

#### Travel and Recreation

Learn more about hunting and fishing, provincial parks, festivals and events, and visiting Ontario. [Learn more](#)

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# County Council Summary

**June 26, 2024**

Below you will find highlights of the County of Renfrew County Council meeting June 26, 2024

Please note that this summary does not constitute the official record of the meeting and approved minutes should be consulted for that purpose.

The full [County Council package](#) can be found on our website.

[June meeting](#) YouTube link.

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## Warden's Address

### Key highlights

- On June 7, the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Renfrew County [Warden's Golf Tournament](#) took place at the Dragonfly Golf Link, raising \$5,000 for two local charities – Autism Ontario - East Region, and the County of Renfrew's Housing and Homelessness Fund. The Warden thanked the generous sponsors and supporters that made the event so successful.
- On June 10, the Renfrew County 2023 Ontario Winter [Games Legacy Fund](#) was announced. The fund, which will see \$375,000 entrusted to the recently renamed Ottawa Valley Community Foundation, will open its first applications in early 2025. The granting areas will consist of a Youth Sport Grant, Sports Clubs Grant, and Major Sports Infrastructure Grant. This event would not have been successful without the hard, dedicated work of the County of Renfrew volunteers and sponsors.

During the month of June, Warden Peter Emon attended 16 meetings on County business.

- From June 12-14, the Warden and Councillor Jennifer Murphy attended the ROMA board meeting in Thunder Bay.
- On June 21, he attended an AMO Board Meeting in Barrie.

## Delegations

- Lori Huber, Partner KPMG, reviewed the 2023 Audited Financial Statements for the County of Renfrew.
- Chairperson Keenan Stone and Jennifer Doelman made a presentation on behalf of the Renfrew County Agriculture Economic Development Committee. The Committee provides guidance and feedback on the state of the agriculture sector and to recommend and assist with possible initiatives in support of agricultural economic and business development.
- Saad El Kassab, Lead Consultant Ainsworth, provided an update on the County of Renfrew's Climate Action Plan.

## Announcements

- MPP John Yakabuski was honoured for his more than 20 years of dedicated service representing Renfrew-Nipissing-Pembroke in the Ontario Legislature. He was joined by members of his family, current and former staff members, and former wardens who recognized his numerous achievements and contributions over the years.

## Community Services Committee

### Presented by: Anne Giardini, Chair

- Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) has developed an interactive dashboard called Substance Use-Related Harms in Renfrew County and District (RCD). The purpose of this dashboard is to provide individuals and community partners with an overview of current substance use-related trends in RCD such as Opioid overdose-related emergency department (ED) visits to local hospitals; Opioid-related deaths; and Suspected drug poisoning deaths. The dashboard can be found on the [RCDHU website](#). This dashboard will be updated quarterly or as data becomes available. The most recent update was June 26, 2024.
- The Pembroke and Area Warming Centre Committee held its final meeting on June 5, 2024 marking the conclusion of its collaborative efforts. The Committee was established to ensure broad representation and input from a diverse range of organizations regarding the Centre's operations. The Warming Centre, which was open from December 1, 2023 to April 18, 2024, was funded through contributions from four municipal partners and fundraising efforts led by The Grind Pembroke. With the Centre now closed, the Committee has been dissolved, and a final report on its activities and future recommendations will be prepared and brought to Council in August.

## Health Committee

### Presented by: Michael Donohue, Chair

- Despite their pivotal contributions, community paramedics often operate in the shadows of traditional healthcare systems, with their expertise and capabilities frequently under recognized and underutilized. By elevating awareness of their unique skill set and scope of practice, this workshop seeks to catalyze a paradigm shift in how healthcare professionals perceive and integrate community paramedics into the broader healthcare ecosystem. Through knowledge exchange, collaborative discussions, and interactive engagement, this workshop serves as a platform for healthcare professionals to communicate, collaborate, and recognize the potential impact when physicians, nurses, and paramedics work together. (Excerpt from the abstract submission.)  
The above titled abstract was accepted by the Canadian Cardiovascular Society as a workshop at the Canadian Cardiovascular Congress being held October 24-27, 2024. The panelists include Ms. Morgan Krauter, Chair, Presenter; County of Renfrew Paramedic Service Advanced Care Paramedic Matt Cruchet, Co-chair, Presenter; Chief Michael Nolan, Presenter; Dr. Aws Almufleh (Moderator); as well as planning committee members and panelists.

# Development & Property Committee

Presented by: James Brose, Chair

- As part of the marketing efforts for Renfrew County's BDO Zone 'AA' Rating, a webinar will be held on August 1, 2024 from 2-3:00 p.m. to a targeted audience of bio-based industry stakeholders, project developers, technology partners, capital markets and investors. Facilitated and hosted by EcoStrat, the webinar will include Business Development Officer David Wybou and County Forester Lacey Rose who will speak to the rating and availability of woody biomass.
- Vendor applications for the 2024 Taste of the Valley event series opened on May 17, 2024. To date, more than 160 applications have been received compared to 66 submitted during the same application period in 2023. Dates and locations for the 2024 event series include: August 10 – Railway Station Park, Barry's Bay; September 7 – Township of Killaloe, Hagarty and Richards Municipal Office, Killaloe; September 28 – Civic Centre, Petawawa; October 19 – Cobden Fairgrounds and December 14 – Renfrew Armouries.
- Ontario By Bike has announced the winners of the annual Bicycle-Friendly Business Awards which celebrate businesses that have taken the extra steps to welcome customers arriving on two wheels. The 2024 recipients for Ontario's Highlands region (RTO11) are two businesses located in the Ottawa Valley – [Ottawa Valley Coffee](#) (located in Renfrew, Arnprior, and Almonte) and [Valley Cycle Tours](#) (located at The Whitewater Inn, Beachburg). The awards are open to businesses certified by Ontario By Bike as bicycle-friendly. There are now more than 1,685 certified bicycle-friendly businesses across Ontario, including 95 from Ontario's Highlands region and [35 from the Ottawa Valley](#).
- Intake for the 2024 Summer Company program closed on May 17, 2024 with a total of 15 applications received.  
A committee reviewed all applications and selected seven individuals who demonstrated exceptional potential and readiness for entrepreneurial success to fill the eligible spots. The 2024 Summer Company program participants are: Cayden McKinnon (Renfrew): car detailing service; Haley Vanderzwaag (Westmeath): care box subscription; Is Ameen O'Brien Jilani (Barry's Bay): lawn game rentals; Katie White (McNab/Braeside): animal balloon business; Ki Myra (Pembroke): clay art; Kyle Radford (Eganville): barbeque cleaning business and Scarlytte Merrill (Deep River): mobile babysitting service.  
The number of eligible spots in the 2024 Summer Company program increased from five to seven due to increased funding from the Ministry of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade (MEDJCT). Participants will each receive a \$1,500 grant to assist with business start-up costs, including equipment purchases, setting up online platforms, etc. To successfully complete the program and receive a second grant of \$1,500, students must log 280 operational hours, complete training, attend bi-weekly meetings and provide proof of sales.
- Air photography (DRAPE4) for the County of Renfrew, was successfully conducted in May, with the final flying day recorded on May 16, 2024. The County was flown with mostly leaf off. The County anticipates receiving the digital air photo files within the first quarter of 2025.
- Renewal work continues at the Beachburg Tract in the natural white pine area that was harvested in 2022/23, with a possible chemical site preparation treatment later this summer and 45,000 trees already growing to be planted in 2025. A public information tour will be hosted by County Forestry staff on July 31, 2024 at 4:30 p.m.

# Operations Committee

**Presented by: Glenn Doncaster, Chair**

- Summer Operations in the Public Works and Engineering Department are well underway. These include street sweeping in urban areas only, hole and catch basin cleaning, pavement marking, bridge cleaning and inspection, shoulder grading, trail maintenance, brushing and ditching program, roadside safety device program and hazardous weed program.
- County Council approved several contracts/agreements as submitted:
  - Rehabilitation of County Road 512 (Foymount Road), from Hubers Road to County Road 515 (Quadeville Road), a distance of 3.44 km, in the Townships of Brudenell, Lyndoch and Raglan, and Bonnechere Valley, Greenwood Paving (Pembroke) Ltd., Pembroke, Ontario, in the amount of \$1,318,940.64, plus applicable taxes.
  - Rehabilitation of County Road 515 (Palmer Road), from County Road 62 (Combermere Road) to Finch Road, a distance of 6.67 km, Township of Madawaska Valley, Bonnechere Excavating Inc., Renfrew, Ontario, in the amount of \$1,720,067.61, plus applicable taxes.
  - Rehabilitation of County Road 30 (Lake Dore Road), from Sperberg Road to Trailblazers Road, a distance of 2.28 km, Township of North Algona/Wilberforce, Bonnechere Excavating Inc., Renfrew, Ontario, in the amount of \$1,372,377.04, plus applicable taxes.

# Finance & Administration Committee

**Presented by: Jennifer Murphy, Chair**

- Plans are underway for a Renfrew County Municipal Day on Thursday, September 26, 2024 at the County Administration Building in Pembroke. The day will consist of presentations from all County departments, focusing on key initiatives, new innovative activities, and opportunities for collaboration, while discussing the operational aspects of each department.
- County Council approved the revised Policy for the Procurement of Goods and Services bringing it in line with the recently approved Delegated Authority By-law. The last update to purchasing authority limits was in May 2013 and the increases were felt warranted to address the impacts of inflation.
- County Council approved several new and amended Human Resources corporate policies and procedures, including Flexible Work Arrangements, Use of County-owned vehicles, and Pregnancy/Parental Leave. For a full list or a copy of the revisions, consult with the HR team.
- The following delegation requests have been submitted for the AMO Conference in Ottawa, August 18-21, 2024:
  - Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Associate Minister of Housing to discuss additional funding opportunities with regards to proposed solutions to housing, including a modular seniors' village project and a transitional home for seniors.
  - Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing and Associate Minister of Housing to discuss additional funding opportunities for transitional and supportive housing.
  - Associate Minister of Mental Health and Addiction to discuss additional funding opportunities for transitional and supportive housing.

- Ministry of Colleges and Universities to discuss the need for the learn and stay grant eligibility to be expanded beyond Northern Ontario and to include Advanced Care Paramedics in the grant eligibility consistent with other health professions.
- Ministry of Long-Term Care to discuss and advocate for permanent base funding for the Community Paramedic Long Term Care program.
- President of the Treasury Board / Minister Mulroney and Associate Minister of Emergency Preparedness and Response to discuss the need for sustainable funding for the Emergency Management Program and the need for a coordinated volunteer corps to assist municipalities establish a surge capacity for civil protection.
- Ministry of Finance and/or the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing to discuss the impact of reassessment.
- Ministry of Education to discuss the need for an increase in child-care spaces in Renfrew County.

## **Additional Information**

**Craig Kelley, Chief Administrative Officer/Deputy Clerk**

613-735-7288



## Medical Officer of Health Report to the Board

Tuesday, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

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### Health Promotion

#### PHN-led CBT Workshop

##### *Description of Program:*

The PHN-led CBT Workshop is a new one-day workshop targeted for clients within Renfrew County and District (RCD) who are pregnant and/or less than 18-months postpartum. The workshop provides an effective, brief option for birthing parents, reducing postpartum depression and anxiety as well as improving social support, the mother-infant relationship, and positive affectivity/surgency in offspring.

##### *Background:*

Components of the workshop include both cognitive and behavioural techniques, which will provide psychoeducation and support to clients. As a result of the workshop, there is also opportunity for participant referral to the Healthy Babies Healthy Children (HBHC) Program at RCDHU. Follow-up with participants is also included to provide additional support and guidance. There is the option for both virtual and in-person workshop delivery, depending on the needs of the RCD community. Due to the versatility of the workshop, there is future opportunity for community partnership to ensure reach to vulnerable populations within RCD that meet workshop eligibility.

##### *Progress on Training:*

Four Public Health Nurses (PHNS), all assigned to program areas within Health Promotion at RCDHU, have been training to facilitate the program since January 2024. The training has consisted of pre-reading materials, two full day classroom training days, one full day practice session, one “mock workshop” that was recorded and feedback was provided, and then the final stage of training is the workshop with live participants from RCD.

The first workshop with live participants was held on **June 20, 2024**. There are two more workshops planned for the fall of 2024.

## **Substance Use Update**

### *Renfrew County and District Drug Strategy:*

The second steering committee meeting for the development and implementation of the Renfrew County and District Drug Strategy (RCDDS) took place on May 30, 2024. At this meeting an update was provided for the Prevention Pillar by Emma Thompson and Kim MacLeod from the Mental Health and Substance Use Health Network and Renfrew County Child and Youth Services. Members learned about current interventions and programs in mental health promotion and substance use prevention in collaboration with school boards, Youth Wellness Hubs Ontario, RCDHU, Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation, and other community partners. Some initial priorities recommended by the Steering Committee for the Prevention Working Group were to increase access to services, reduce stigma, provide long-term counselling for those aged 17-24, acquire transition beds, develop data indicators, and an ongoing evaluation framework.

In addition, the Steering Committee identified the need to create a Community Safety Working Group to implement recommendations under that pillar of the RCDDS. RCDHU is working with community partners to establish this working group before the next Steering Committee Meeting on June 27, 2024.

### *Mesa Gathering:*

RCDHU collaborated with the County of Renfrew and Ottawa Valley Ontario Health Team in the planning of the Mesa Gathering on May 22, 2024, at Miramichi Lodge. The event brought together more than 140 participants from approximately 30 organizations across Renfrew County and District already working to address homelessness, mental health, and substance use.

Attendees heard a powerful message of recovery from members of our community with lived experience, a keynote by CBC reporter and producer Omar Dabaghi-Pacheco on the opioid crisis, and a message of compassion for vulnerable populations from Deirdre Freiheit, former President and CEO of Shepherds of Good Hope in Ottawa.

Renfrew County and District organizations shared information about their programs and services; RCDHU provided an update on the development of the RCDDS and an overview of its Harm Reduction Program. The RCDDS and RCDHU's harm reduction programming are summarized in the infographics attached to this update.

### *Opioid Overdose Response Plan and Harm Reduction Working Group:*

On June 19, 2024, RCDHU chaired the quarterly meeting for partners of the Opioid Overdose Response Plan. This meeting served as a forum for partners to share surveillance data, program information, and knowledge related to surges in opioid overdoses and the detection of any high-potency opioid formulations circulating locally.

At this meeting, partners were offered the opportunity to participate in the Harm Reduction Working Group as part of the RCDDS. Discussion took place to review current

and upcoming harm reduction interventions, define the scope of the working group and identify additional partners that should be included.

## **General Updates**

### **Ontario Public Health Standards (OPHS) Review**

In August of 2023 the Province announced their three-pronged Strengthening Public Health plan, which included a review of the Ontario Public Health Standards that guide all our work as a local public health agency. The aims of this review are to refocus, refine, and re-level public health responsibilities. Re-leveling refers to potentially shifting some responsibilities to the regional or provincial level.

Draft versions of the updated standards and associated protocols were recently provided to health units for comment, with a very limited window to respond to a survey due last week on June 20. An initial internal review was conducted for the potential operational and planning implications. The new standards were originally planned for implementation in January of 2025, but it is unclear when the final standards will be released and if this implementation timeline will still be feasible.

Overall, the changes to the standards were less significant than anticipated. It was also thought that changes to the standards would reduce local public health workload; however, overall, there are increased responsibilities outlined in the draft standards. This could result in implementation challenges due to RCDHU's already strained resources, which has been noted in comments to the province.

Some of the protocols have been combined and reorganized, in particular surrounding health promotion; however, the substantive changes are more limited. There are increased and/or more defined public health responsibilities across some areas, including emergency preparedness, responding to substance use harms, and engagement with Indigenous communities. These changes reflect our local priorities and, in many cases, RCDHU has already shifted focus in accordance with the changes. For example, there is a new leadership role to work with community partners on a comprehensive drug strategy, which has already been undertaken.

RCDHU staff will continue monitoring, reviewing, and planning related to the OPHS review to facilitate implementation next year.



## **Leveraging Partnerships**

RCDHU staff continue exploring innovative partnerships to enhance public health services in our local communities. One example that started last year is Getakit, a collaboration with the University of Ottawa, that provides online access to health assessment and mailed testing kits for sexually transmitted infections. As an early adopter, RCDHU was recently invited as a co-author on a scientific paper that outlines the implementation and successes of the program thus far. Getakit increased accessibility to testing for priority populations and demonstrated up to a 63% reduction in the system-level cost to provide sexual health services.

Another collaborative initiative that RCDHU is undertaking with Queen's University is The Syphilis Point of Care Rapid Testing and Immediate Treatment Evaluation, or SPRITE. In alignment with our increased outreach efforts, staff will be able to provide rapid testing for Syphilis and HIV to vulnerable populations in Renfrew County and District, including people who are underhoused. This is one new part of an outreach strategy that also includes immunization, harm reduction services, and system navigation alongside our community partners.

Finally, to help support our new Public Health Nurse-led cognitive behavioural workshops for postpartum depression, RCDHU is exploring opportunities to combine and share these services with other East Region health units. This would provide increased accessibility and comprehensiveness of the perinatal mental health services in Renfrew County and District.

More updates on these initiatives and others will be forthcoming shortly.

## **Health Protection**

### **Infectious Diseases Program**

#### *Respiratory Illness:*

Respiratory-related outbreak activity continues to be low and steady, with an average of 1 new respiratory outbreak declared each week. There are currently 0 active respiratory outbreaks in RCD (as of June 19<sup>th</sup>).

As of June 10<sup>th</sup>, a total of 107 influenza cases have been reported to RCDHU (77 influenza A cases + 30 influenza B cases) in the 2023-24 respiratory season. Weekly influenza case numbers and percent positivity continue to trend downward at the local and Provincial level. With respect to COVID-19, while overall local activity remains low, a brief increase in percent positivity was observed (up from <5% in April and mid-May to

20% the last week of May), in part due to a recent COVID-19 outbreak and decreased testing volumes. Preliminary data for the week of June 2<sup>nd</sup> suggest percent positivity will trend back to <5%.

Local Influenza A and B wastewater signals from both Pembroke and Petawawa sampling sites remain low and stable. COVID-19 signals from the Petawawa sampling site have been variable over the past month but remain lower compared to levels observed in December 2023. COVID-19 wastewater signals from the Pembroke site remain low and stable.

#### *Case and Contact Management Software Discontinued:*

Early on during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Health supported public health units in adopting a modern, highly functional software platform for COVID-19 case, contact, and outbreak management, called the Case and Contact Management Solution (CCM). The software enabled greater efficiency, collaboration, and real-time analytics of disease trends. The software was a key enabler for an effective pandemic response.

On April 25, 2024, the province announced that this novel software platform is being discontinued as of the end of June, 2024, requiring all health units to revert to using an older software platform with less functionality. The rapid changeover has required significant work from staff to transition in a short time period. Additionally, there will now be limited ability to monitor and report on COVID-19 cases unless a new process for reliably capturing this information is developed.

#### *Wastewater Surveillance Funding Discontinued:*

The province recently announced that funding is being discontinued for the wastewater disease surveillance program previously supported by the Ministry of Environment, Conservation, and Parks. Locally, we rely on this program to provide information on community spread of COVID-19 and flu in Petawawa and Pembroke. After July 31, 2024, it will no longer be available.

Wastewater surveillance of infectious diseases is a novel approach, and one of the successful innovations scaled up to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is a cost-effective means of providing timely information on disease spread throughout the community that doesn't rely on individual testing, which is costly, has delays, and doesn't reflect the whole community. For example, individual testing for COVID-19 and influenza is limited to a small group of eligible people. Community members across Ontario have voiced the importance of this information to inform their risk assessments, and RCDHU has included it in the new Respiratory Illness Data Summary that is updated weekly.

Additional benefits of wastewater surveillance that are being explored include the ability to rapidly identify emerging pathogens that may be circulating in a community, such as H5N1 (avian flu), and the potential to rapidly identify outbreaks in vulnerable populations, such as long-term care homes.

The province has highlighted that there is a Federal wastewater surveillance system. However, Toronto is the only city included in the Federal program. Without ongoing support from the province, local wastewater surveillance will no longer be possible.

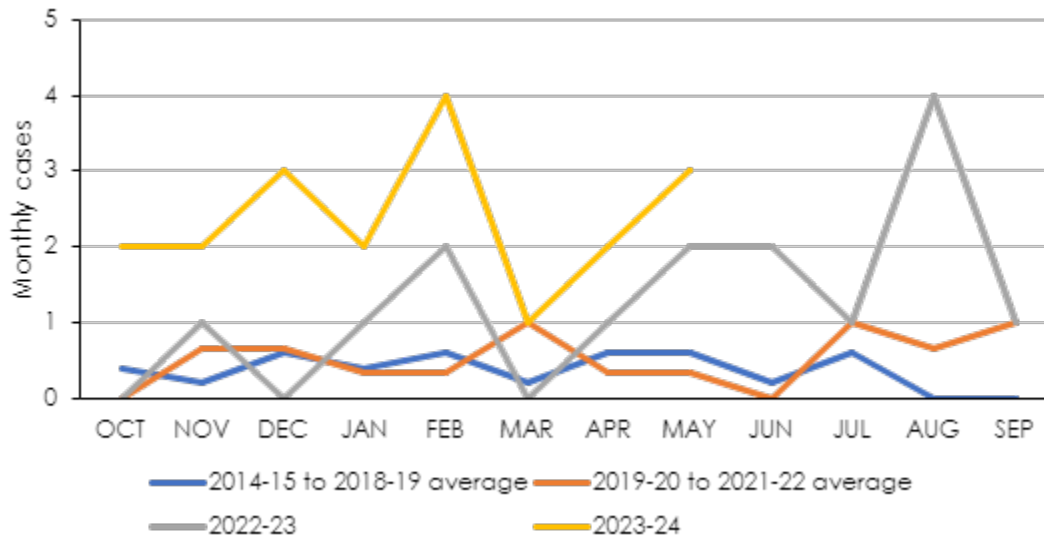
#### *Invasive Group A Streptococcal (iGAS) Disease:*

RCDHU, Canada as whole, and multiple other countries have noted significant increases in iGAS infections over the past year and a half. Typical, non-invasive group A streptococcus infections are relatively common (e.g., strep throat) and are not reported to the Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU). In rare cases, the group A streptococcus bacterium becomes more serious and invasive, infecting the blood, tissues, or muscle. These iGAS infections are reported to RCDHU to enable monitoring and actions to protect others from infection.

So far in the current iGAS season (2023 Oct-2024 May), there have been 19 cases of iGAS in RCD, which is higher compared to the count this time last season (2022-23 with 7 cases) and compared to the average count during the 2014-15 to 2018-19 seasons (4 cases) (see Figure 1). The rate of iGAS cases so far this season in RCD is ~17 per 100,000, which is higher compared to the rate for Ontario (~10 per 100,000).

On a Provincial level, as described in PHO's Enhanced Epidemiologic Summary (May 2024), there was an overall decrease in the number of iGAS cases reported in April 2024 compared to March 2024, continuing the decline from January's peak. Those 65 years of age and older reported the highest incidence rate.

**Figure 1.** Monthly number of confirmed cases of Invasive Group A Streptococcal (iGAS) Disease in Renfrew County and District, current season (2023-24) compared to previous seasons



In response to the increase in iGAS cases, RCDHU has updated its website with [information on iGAS](#) and shared prevention messages with local media. RCDHU staff also follow-up with every individual diagnosed with iGAS to provide supports and coordinate antibiotics for close contacts, as needed, to prevent further spread. Public health follow-up for iGAS is complex and staff have been doing an excellent job providing a high standard of care in the context of a significant increase in volume.

Key actions for all of us to prevent iGAS infections include:

- Frequent hand washing, especially before preparing or eating meals and after coughing or sneezing,
- Keeping wounds clean and monitoring for signs of infection, such as marked pain, redness, swelling, and drainage,
- Being vaccinated against viral illnesses that increase the risk of a group A streptococcus infection, including chickenpox, COVID-19 and the flu.

Group A streptococcal infections are treated with antibiotics, unlike most sore throats, which are typically caused by viruses. Prompt treatment of group A streptococcus is important to prevent complications or even death. Anyone who is concerned about a group A streptococcal infection should act quickly and seek advice from their healthcare provider, Renfrew County Virtual Triage and Assessment Centre (RC VTAC), or Health811.

- Prolonged fever and sore throat or fever and sore throat without associated cold symptoms (like cough and runny nose) are typical group A streptococcus symptoms.

- Rapidly worsening symptoms or severe symptoms such as trouble breathing, difficulty swallowing, severe pain, or confusion should prompt emergency medical attention.

## **Immunization Program**

In May, Immunization Program staff began to work with Licensed Child Care Operators in Renfrew County and District (RCD) to assist with immunization surveillance as required under the *Child Care and Early Years Act*. As of May 2024, RCD has a total of 27 licensed child care facilities with approximately 980 children enrolled. To support surveillance efforts, approximately 250 notices were distributed to parents/legal guardians whose children were either missing immunization information or were not up to date with the required vaccines for child care attendance. Children who require access to immunization services can either book an appointment at an RCDHU community clinic or through their health care provider. It is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to report all updated immunizations to both the licensed child care provider and RCDHU.

All second-round grade 7 school-based immunization clinics for the 2023-2024 school year were hosted from the beginning of March to the second week of May. In total, RCDHU hosted 36 school clinics, and provided over 1300 doses of Hepatitis B, Meningococcal, or Human Papilloma Virus vaccines to eligible students. RCDHU staff are currently in the process of doing outreach to students who may have missed the opportunity to be vaccinated at a school-based clinic. These students are offered a catch-up appointment at an RCDHU community clinic or referred to their health care provider to be vaccinated.

RCDHU's Vaccine Inventory Team has started to plan annual cold chain inspections for all facilities that order and store publicly funded vaccines in RCD. It is anticipated that approximately 122 vaccine storage units will need to be inspected in 2024. These cold chain inspections are planned to occur from June to September.

## **Healthy Environments and Emergency Management**

### *Avian Influenza:*

Avian influenza is being monitored closely across North America. This is a form of the influenza virus, H5N1, that has been circulating primarily among wild birds, with periodic human infections documented since the late 1990s. Sustained human-to-human transmission of H5N1 has not been observed. Over the past 2-3 years, H5N1 has become widespread in wild bird populations across North America, with many different

species of mammals also developing documented infections. Poultry outbreaks and related biosecurity precautions have been a focus during this time. This Spring in the United States, H5N1 infections in cattle have been confirmed for the first time. There have subsequently been 3 human cases of avian flu infection linked to contact with infected cattle.

The new capacity of H5N1 to spread to cattle and then to humans is concerning, as it increases the ongoing potential for crossover spread to humans. Avian flu is monitored closely because there is the potential that it could mutate and spread more easily among humans. Previous influenza pandemics have been caused by such events, when the virus crosses over from animals to humans, because our immune systems are less equipped to deal with the new pathogen.

The Public Health Agency of Canada and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have recently updated their risk assessments. The risk of avian flu infection to the general public is low. Fragments of the H5N1 virus have been detected in milk samples in the United States, however, the virus is inactivated by pasteurization. Similar testing has been conducted by the Canadian Food Inspection Agency in Canada, with no virus detected in Canadian samples at this time.

RCDHU has updated the information on avian influenza available on its [website](#). RCDHU staff also sent a memo to all hospitals and healthcare providers in the region with an update on avian influenza and advising them of the enhanced avian flu surveillance requirements at local hospitals. Finally, RCDHU will be conducting a tabletop exercise to prepare for the public health response to any potential local avian flu case or poultry outbreak.

Important precautions to help prevent avian influenza infections include:

- Avoiding direct contact with sick or dead wild birds and other animals.
- As always, not consuming unpasteurized/raw milk.
- Reporting any sick or dead birds to the Canadian Wildlife Health Cooperative at 1-866-673-4781.

#### *Food Safety and Farmers' Markets:*

Renfrew County and District (RCD) communities offer many new events in the spring, including farmer's markets with delicious local food. As part of the RCDHU mandate in Food Safety, public health inspectors have begun annual conversations with our farmer's market operators to approve their operations for 2024. The health unit's purpose is to monitor the wholesomeness and safety of the food for sale and ensure that they meet minimum food safety standards. At least one annual inspection of each market takes place. Inspectors meticulously review each farmer's market vendor list and provide comprehensive guidelines for the market operators and vendors to follow.

The guidance documents can be found on our [website](#). There are 18 farmer's markets in RCD for the 2024 season.

*Extreme Heat Event:*

RCD experienced the first heat event of the summer. As per the Health Hazard Response Protocol, RCDHU issued a [media advisory](#) to RCD residents to inform them of the Environment and Climate Change Canada declared event and to communicate precautions to take to minimize any adverse health effects that may be experienced from the extreme heat.

Submitted by: Dr. Jason Morgenstern  
Medical Officer of Health  
Renfrew County and District Health Unit



## Harm Reduction



- Strategies and ideas to minimize harmful consequences associated with substance use.
- Community based, client driven, non-judgmental, and addresses systems and inequities that isolate and marginalize individuals.
- Guided by the CATIE Working Group on Best Practice for Harm Reduction Programs in Canada.
- Proven to be effective in preventing transmission of blood borne viruses and pathogens such as HIV, Hepatitis C and B, and sexually transmitted infections.

## Harm Reduction Supplies

<b>Safe Injection Supplies</b>	Needles, cookers/spoons, sterile water, tourniquets, alcohol swabs, vitamin C
<b>Safe Inhalation Supplies</b>	Stem pipes, bulb pipes, brass screens, pushsticks, mouthpieces
<b>Safer Sex Supplies</b>	Various condoms, lubrication
<b>Safe Disposal of Supplies</b>	Various sizes of sharps containers, including personal sharps
<b>Other Supplies</b>	Toothbrushes

## Ontario Naloxone Program (ONP)

- Distribute nasal spray naloxone kits through participating community-based organizations to:
  - Individuals at risk of opioid overdose
  - The individual's friends and family
- Eligible organizations include:
  - Public health units
  - Outreach programs
  - Community Health Centres
  - Hospital emergency departments
  - And many more!
- RCDHU is responsible for onboarding, providing supply of naloxone kits, and reporting to the Ministry of Health
- RCDHU provides training upon request





# HARM REDUCTION SERVICES

Renfrew County and District Health Unit



## Community Opioid Overdose Response Plan

- The plan identifies how the community can respond to opioid related events that have the potential to tax first responders, hospitals, resources, and/or cause harm or death in the community
- It includes the collection and analysis of information on overdose/drug toxicity events from qualitative and quantitative data sources
  - Clients
  - Neighbouring Health Units
  - Ministry of Health
  - Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario
  - **Community Partner reporting**
- Monitor for signs of changes in the toxic drug supply and communicate information to partners, clients, and general public

### Suspect Overdose Drug Toxicity Reporting Form



Use of this form will **increase efficiency** and **reduce workload** for Community Partners and allow us to **gather more accurate** information.

## Substance Use-Related Harms In Renfrew County and District

The purpose of this dashboard is to provide individuals and community partners with an overview of current substance use-related trends in Renfrew County and District (RCD) such as:

- Opioid overdose-related emergency department visits to local hospitals
- Opioid-related deaths
- Suspect drug poisoning deaths



Scan to view

This dashboard will be updated quarterly (e.g. every 3 months) or as data becomes available. Data for recent years is considered preliminary data and subject to change in future updates. Data is primarily sourced from the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario and the National Ambulatory Care Reporting System (NARCS) via the Ministry of Health.

Introduction	Annual data summary	Quarterly data summary	Opioid overdose-related ED visits	Opioid-related deaths	Suspect drug poisoning deaths
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### Future Opportunities



- Expanding outreach based on needs
- Syphilis Point-of-Care Rapid Testing and Immediate Treatment Evaluation (SPRITE) program
- Point-of-care testing for syphilis and HIV
- Confirmatory serology
- Initiation of treatment for suspected syphilis
- Referral for follow-up

### Other RCDHU Programs



- Healthy Babies Healthy Children
- Immunization
- Infectious Diseases
- Sexual Health
- Healthy Environments
- Dental – Healthy Smiles Ontario, Ontario Seniors Dental Care

Contact the RCDHU Harm Reduction Team at: [harmreduction@rcdhu.com](mailto:harmreduction@rcdhu.com) or 613-602-6056

# RENFREW COUNTY AND DISTRICT DRUG STRATEGY

WHERE



WHO



WHAT

- 1 Lead and guide the development and implementation of the Renfrew County and District Drug Strategy (RCDDS), which will aim to minimize substance use related harms in Renfrew County and District.
- 2 Establish RCDDS working groups for each of the four pillars.
- 3 Advise and direct working groups.
- 4 Monitor and evaluate progress.

HOW



Prevention



Treatment



Harm Reduction



Community Safety

Supported by a strong evidence base

**From:** AMO Policy <policy@amo.on.ca>  
**Sent:** July 2, 2024 5:15 PM  
**To:** Group Annprior  
**Subject:** AMO Policy Update: New AMO Advocacy on Homelessness, Opioids, and Water Infrastructure Demonstrate the Critical Need for Social and Economic Prosperity Review



## **AMO Policy Update: New AMO Advocacy on Homelessness, Opioids, and Water Infrastructure Demonstrate the Critical Need for Social and Economic Prosperity Review**

### **AMO Continues to Advocate for a Social and Economic Prosperity Review**

Earlier this year, AMO and nearly 100 of its members called on the provincial government to commit to a Social and Economic Prosperity Review to fix the broken provincial-municipal fiscal framework. AMO is now calling on the provincial government to commit to this joint review at the 2024 AMO Conference in August.

AMO is pleased to share new tools to support the next chapter of advocacy on this important initiative, including:

- [Updated messaging](#) highlighting the need for action on municipal fiscal sustainability to address the things Ontarians care most about – like housing affordability, healthcare, cost of living and public safety
- [A template letter](#) to provincial Ministers

We hope that you share widely and use this material to engage with fellow council members, MPPs, and community members in communicating why this challenge is urgent, province-wide, and central to Ontario’s social and economic prosperity.

## Call for Provincial and Federal Action on Homeless Encampments

Nowhere is the need to fix the provincial-municipal fiscal framework more clear than in responding to the homelessness crisis.

While municipalities did not create the homelessness crisis, they are being forced to manage it without the resources or tools to sufficiently respond. Municipalities are often caught balancing the important needs of unsheltered people living in encampments, who deserve to be treated with empathy and respect, and a responsibility to ensure our communities are safe and vibrant places for all residents.

To support conversations at Council, with communities, and with provincial and federal governments, AMO is pleased to share the following resources:

- [Homeless Encampments in Ontario: A Municipal Perspective](#) – This paper illustrates the complex situations municipalities are managing while calling on the provincial and federal governments for leadership and action.
- [Key messages](#) from the AMO paper to help provide context for local discussions.
- [Social media cards](#) to highlight urgent needs like provincial guidance to municipalities on how to manage encampments in an increasingly complex legal landscape.

## Call for Provincial Action on the Opioid Crisis

More than 2500 Ontarians died due to opioids in 2023, in communities big and small across the province. Increasingly, divisive rhetoric is distracting from much needed government action and leadership.

AMO collaborated with key partners from the health, justice, business and social services sectors to develop [The Opioid Crisis: A Municipal Perspective](#). This paper seeks to re-focus attention on evidence-based solutions across the four pillars of prevention, treatment, enforcement and harm reduction.

Please also find attached the following resources to understand what this crisis is doing to your community and to call attention to the need to act, including:

- [Local information](#) on opioid deaths in your municipality
- [Key messages](#) from the AMO paper to help provide context for local discussions

- [Social media cards](#) to highlight the need for evidence-based solutions

## Water and Wastewater Municipal Services Corporations

Over the next 10 years, Ontario's municipalities are planning to make more than \$250 billion in capital investments to support growth, and replace and renew aging assets, including water and wastewater infrastructure. What role can and should municipal services corporations for water and wastewater play in supporting growth and delivering this critical public service?

AMO and MFOA have developed a [backgrounder](#) for municipalities on municipal services corporations for water and wastewater. This municipal resource includes:

- Facts about MSCs for water and wastewater.
- The benefits, strategic considerations and risks related to governance, finance, and planning.
- Examples of four existing MSCs.

Municipal services corporations won't work for every municipality. AMO firmly believes that to make the best long-term decisions for residents, communities and the economy, decisions around delivering water and wastewater through a municipal services corporation should be led by the municipal sector.

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June 20, 2024

### In This Issue

- AMO Board nominations - Deadline to submit: June 24.
- Webinar recording: Conservation Authorities & Municipalities Working Together.
- New *Senior Active Living Centres Act* regulation.
- Enabling Accessibility Fund - Small Projects Component.
- Municipal Codes of Conduct: Do not miss our in person workshop August 17.
- AMO Conference - Be aware of scams!
- Navigating Conflict Relationships: Transforming conflict into collaboration.
- Indigenous Community Awareness training.
- Blog: Risk Financing.
- Hunt for efficiency in water and wastewater plants.
- Registration opens for Western Ontario Municipal Conference.
- Careers.

### AMO Matters

Have you considered serving on AMO's Board? Participate in setting strategic objectives, policy and program initiatives, and the budget. Deadline to submit nomination form: Monday, June 24, 2024 at 12:00 p.m. (ET). [Click here](#) for more information.

Last week, Conservation Ontario and AMO recorded [a webinar](#) on updates to the *Conservation Authorities Act* that highlighted opportunities for collaboration between Conservation Authorities and municipalities.

### Provincial Matters

The new *Senior Active Living Centres Act* [regulation](#) improves access to the SALC program by allowing additional entities that can make the required 20% funding contribution. For more information contact [seniorspolicyunit@ontario.ca](mailto:seniorspolicyunit@ontario.ca).

### Federal Matters

The [Enabling Accessibility Fund](#) aims to make communities and workplaces across Canada more accessible for persons with disabilities. Up to \$125,000 for a project that is up to 2 years in duration. Not-for-profit organizations, for-profit organizations, indigenous organizations, municipal and territorial governments are eligible to apply. Deadline: July 23, 2024.

### Education Opportunities

The [Municipal Codes of Conduct pre-conference workshop](#) on Saturday, August 17 is for those municipal leaders who are looking to guide and strengthen their council and corporation's conduct, behaviour, and practices. Register today - space is limited.

It is important to know that AMO will never solicit its members participation in our annual conference through other parties. A number of members have reported receiving emails from third parties to book your hotel rooms for the conference. This is a scam/phishing exercise. Be diligent, hackers are becoming more and more sophisticated. If it seems odd, or doesn't feel right, trust your instinct. Feel free to reach out to us at [events@amo.on.ca](mailto:events@amo.on.ca).

Having conflict-free and collaborative relationships can play a significant role in helping locally elected officials carry out your collective responsibilities as decision-makers of their communities. Learn how to accomplish this at the [June 26-27 Navigating Conflict Relationships workshop](#).

OFIFC and AMO are offering training to build indigenous cultural competency in municipal government. Through a self-paced learning module and live virtual component, this training will provide knowledge and tools to utilize in moving improved and stronger Indigenous-municipal relations forward in Ontario. [Register today](#) for the October 8 workshop.

Ontario municipalities' broad scope of responsibilities exposes them to a wider range of risks, making comprehensive risk management strategies and sufficient insurance coverage a key part of their strategic plans. [Read about the options available for risk financing](#) outside of traditional insurance procurement.

Do you want more efficient Water and Wastewater facilities? LAS offers professional [on-site energy workshops and treasure hunts](#) to help reduce energy consumption and lower your hydro bills in your plants. Training is eligible for IESO incentives. [Contact Christian](#) for more details.

#### **Municipal Wire\***

WOWC is holding its annual [Western Ontario Municipal Conference](#) in Chatham-Kent on October 25, 2024. Explore and collaborate on a wide range of topics affecting our municipalities.

#### **Careers**

[Manager, Parks and Recreation - City of Kawartha Lakes](#). Closing Date: June 28.

[Director, Stakeholder and Partnerships - Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs](#). Closing Date: July 3.

[Intergovernmental Affairs Specialist - City of Barrie](#). Closing Date: July 4.

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#### **About AMO**

AMO is a non-profit organization representing almost all of Ontario's 444 municipal governments. AMO supports strong and effective municipal government in Ontario and promotes the value of municipal government as a vital and essential component of Ontario's and Canada's political system. Follow [@AMOPolicy](#) on Twitter!

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#### **AMO Contacts**

[AMO Watchfile](#) Tel: 416.971.9856

[Conferences/Events](#)

[Policy and Funding Programs](#)

[LAS Local Authority Services](#)

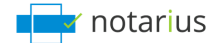
[MEPCO Municipal Employer Pension Centre of Ontario](#)

[ONE Investment](#)

[Media Inquiries](#)

[Municipal Wire, Career/Employment and Council Resolution Distributions](#)

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June 27, 2024

### In This Issue

- Get access to MIDAS.
- New *Senior Active Living Centres Act* regulation.
- Municipal Codes of Conduct: Pre-conference workshop at AMO 2024.
- Indigenous Community Awareness training.
- Plan your fall education schedule.
- Buying ambulances in Ontario: Canoe Procurement Group.
- Hunt for efficiency in water and wastewater plants.
- Registration now open for OMSSA's 2024 Forum!
- Registration opens for Western Ontario Municipal Conference.
- Opportunity to help project researching municipal energy needs.
- Careers.

### AMO Matters

The [Municipal Information & Data Analysis System](#) (MIDAS) - recently enhanced - is a web-based tool that provides access to the Financial Information Returns (FIRs) data to all Ontario municipalities. For access, municipal elected officials and municipal staff can email [MIDASAdmin@amo.on.ca](mailto:MIDASAdmin@amo.on.ca).

### Provincial Matters

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Time to sign up for AMO Education fall workshops: [Cybersecurity for Municipal Councillors](#), [Strategic Thinking, Planning and Leading](#), [Managing Communications through Crisis](#), [Indigenous Community Awareness](#), [Navigating Conflict as an Elected Official](#), [Land Use Planning](#), [Competing Rights](#), and [Community Engagement Strategic Approaches](#).

### LAS

The Canoe Procurement Group, a not-for-profit buying group run by municipal associations across Canada, is pleased to announce it has procured two Ambulance suppliers for Ontario's municipal sector - Demers and Crestline. [Find contracts and RFP information here](#). Contact [Tony De Scisio](#) from Canoe for guidance on how these contracts work.

Do you want more efficient water and wastewater facilities? LAS offers professional [on-site energy workshops and treasure hunts](#) to help reduce energy consumption and lower your hydro bills in your plants. Training is eligible for IESO incentives. [Contact Christian](#) for more details.

### Municipal Wire\*

Join the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA) virtually on September 24-25 to learn about current issues that are impacting community safety and well-being. Hear about successes and how to evaluate the impact of this work. [Register today](#).



Explore and collaborate on a wide range of topics affecting our municipalities.

Pollution Probe and QUEST Canada aim to talk for one hour with Ontario communities for an [OEB-funded project](#) to address your community's innovative energy needs and priorities. Register by emailing [rkiro@pollutionprobe.org](mailto:rkiro@pollutionprobe.org) until September 16.

#### Careers

[Development Application Coordinator - City of Windsor](#). Closing date: July 4, 2024.

[Manager, Stakeholder Relations & Issues Management - City of Toronto](#). Closing Date: July 4, 2024.

[Supervisor, Financial Services - City of Thunder Bay](#). Closing Date: July 21, 2024.

[Senior Manager, Talent Management - Odgers Berndtson Client](#). Closing Date: July 25, 2024.

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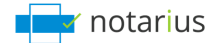
[LAS Local Authority Services](#)

[MEPCO Municipal Employer Pension Centre of Ontario](#)

[ONE Investment](#)

[Media Inquiries](#)

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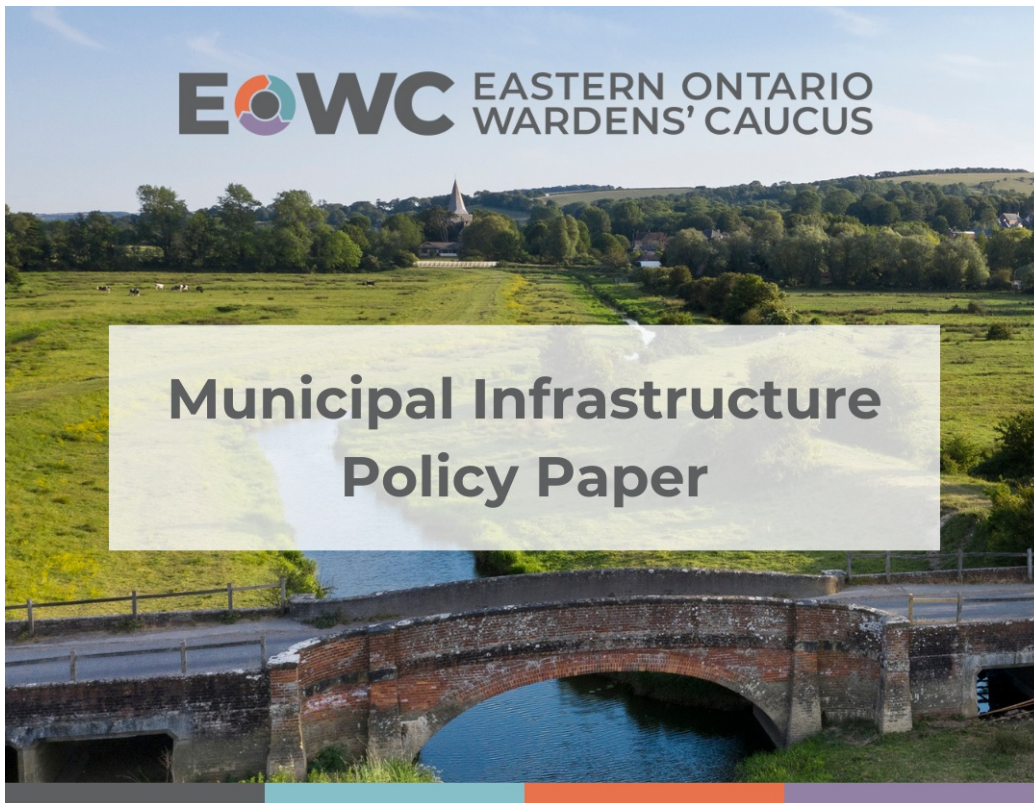
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# Newsletter

June 2024

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## The EOWC Releases Municipal Infrastructure Policy Paper



Under its number one strategic priority of infrastructure, the EOWC has released the regional [2024 Municipal Infrastructure Policy Paper](#).

This paper covers key infrastructure data and recommendations from across the region. The information will support Eastern Ontario's municipal policy and program advocacy, applications for government funding, and future partnerships around infrastructure that will help enable the region's prosperity and housing for all.

Additionally, the paper will shape the advocacy initiatives as part of the infrastructure priority in the [EOWC's 2024-2027 Strategic Plan](#).

Find the [news release here](#).

## Key Takeaways

The EOWC is committed to building a better Eastern Ontario. We want to partner with the Federal and Ontario Governments to address the infrastructure deficit.



Rural Eastern Ontario is a growing economy that can grow more



Rural Eastern Ontario communities are major exporters to Ontario and other jurisdictions



There is an upfront cost to growth, creating a burden for small rural communities



Small, rural municipalities lack tax base to sustain infrastructure investment and asset management



Innovation is key to cost-effective infrastructure management

[Download the Policy Paper](#)

## The EOWC Delivers Strategic Plan



The EOWC has released the [2024-2027 Strategic Plan](#). Through collaboration and consolidated feedback among representatives of member municipalities, the EOWC identifies three strategic priorities that will guide its decision-making and advocacy focus for the next three years:

- **Infrastructure investment**

- **Housing for all**
- **Health care access**

“Reliable infrastructure systems and facilities to foster growth, a range of housing options that are affordable and meet the needs of all people, and access to health care services are critically important to people living, raising families, and building businesses in Eastern Ontario,” says EOWC Chair Peter Emon. “This strategic plan is a blueprint for ensuring that we all work together to ensure those needs are met for residents of rural Eastern Ontario, now and into the future.”

Read the [news release here](#).

[Download the Full Plan](#)

## Recent Events



### Eastern Ontario Housing Summit

The EOWC was pleased to attend and be a key partner at the [Eastern Ontario Housing Summit](#) in partnership with the Ontario Home Builders' Association on May 28, 2024 in the City of Ottawa.

With representation from over 35 municipalities, and attendance by MPs, MPPs, housing sector experts, and home builders from Eastern Ontario, the event was a true success representing cross-sector collaboration.

The EOWC is proud of the ongoing partnership we have built with Eastern Ontario Home Builders. Special thanks to Eastern Regional Chairs Glenn Evans and Pierre Dufresne.

Special thanks to all who attended our 'Housing in Smaller Municipalities' panel, which explored:

- The EOWC's regional housing and infrastructure advocacy,

presented by Chair Peter Emon and Manager Meredith Staveley-Watson;

- The County of Frontenac's municipal communal services corporation, presented by CAO Kevin Farrell;
- The All-Together Housing non-profit-private-public partnerships to create socially inclusive and economically diverse communities, presented by All-Together President, Bob Cottrell, and Springdale Development President, Philip Spry.



## The EOWC Attends Peterborough Day at Queen's Park

The EOWC attended Peterborough Day at Queen's Park, led by our Vice-Chair, Bonnie Clark, Warden of Peterborough County, and hosted by MPP Dave Smith!

We were pleased to be showcased alongside the Peterborough County and City of Peterborough as part of the region's innovative businesses and organizations. We shared our [2024-2027 Strategic Plan](#) and had meaningful conversations around priorities with the many Ministers, MPPs and provincial staff in attendance.



## The EOWC Board of Directors Meeting at Base 31

The EOWC was pleased to host our Board of Directors meeting at Base 31 in Prince Edward County in May to discuss regional priorities.

EOWC members enjoyed touring Base 31 as a world-renowned cultural tourism destination right here in Eastern Ontario. We were especially impressed with the museum display of the Lancaster bomber from the Second World War!

## EOWC Advocacy



### The Federation of Canadian Municipalities launches Municipal Growth Framework

The FCM just launched a paper championing a new Municipal Growth Framework to help Canadian Municipalities address our most pressing national challenges – aging infrastructure, climate change, public safety, housing and homelessness.

The EOWC fully supports the call for all levels of government to come together and negotiate a bold new Municipal Growth Framework. Learn more [here](#).

Visit our Website

## EORN Update



### What's new with EORN?

The Eastern Ontario Regional Network (EORN), the Government of Canada, the Government of Ontario, and Rogers Communications recently announced that Rogers 5G mobile services are now available in 21 communities across Eastern Ontario. Forty-two new cell towers and four additional upgrades to existing sites are completed, and now offer Rogers 5G mobile services to residents, businesses and visitors.

Learn more and see if Rogers 5G mobile services are available in your area [here](#).

## Upcoming Events



### AMO Annual Conference

The [Association of Municipalities of Ontario \(AMO\) Conference](#) will return to the City of Ottawa from August 18 – 21, 2024. This year's conference includes a celebration of AMO's 125th anniversary. The EOWC looks forward to meeting with provincial officials, networking with the 444 municipalities represented, and advocating for issues and solutions related to our strategic priorities.

## Connect With Us on LinkedIn and X



### About the EOWC

The EOWC is a regional non-profit organization representing 13 upper and single-tier municipalities across Eastern Ontario. The EOWC supports and advocates on behalf of 103 municipalities and nearly 800,000 residents. The EOWC covers an area of approximately 50,000 square kilometers from Northumberland County to the Québec border.

The EOWC has gained support and momentum by speaking with a united voice to champion regional municipal priorities and work with government, business leaders, the media, and the public.

Visit the EOWC's website at [eowc.org](http://eowc.org).

## Connect with the EOWC

2024 Chair, Warden of Renfrew County, Peter Emon

2024 Vice-Chair, Warden of Peterborough County, Bonnie Clark

Manager of Government Relations and Policy, Meredith Staveley-Watson

[info@eowc.org](mailto:info@eowc.org)

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Meredith Staveley-Watson, Manager of Government Relations and Policy | 235 Pinnacle Street | Belleville, ON K8N 3A9 CA

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# The Unity Run 2024



## SAVE THE DATE!

**Community Living Renfrew County South is proud to announce the return of our Unity Run!**

**Date:** October 6th, 2024 @ 8 am

**Location:** Renfrew Armouries  
115 Veterans Memorial Blvd  
Renfrew, Ontario  
K7V 2R5



**All proceeds from this event will go directly to our Opportunities Fund**

**Registration and fees TBD.**

**Stay tuned to Facebook and our website for more information!**

**COMMUNITY LIVING**  
Renfrew County South  
*Inspiring Possibilities*

CELEBRATING  
**60**  
YEARS OF POSSIBILITIES

*June 17, 2024*

*Hello. I am very excited to share with you a copy of our hospital's 2024-2029 Strategic Plan.*

*Its development began last fall when our Board members and leadership team reviewed data, gathered input from provincial and local leaders, voiced thoughts and shared ideas.*

*We conducted extensive engagement with over 1,000 individuals – members of our health care team, our partners, our patients, their families and the public at large, so that the plan would reflect the needs of those we serve.*

*Our goal was to have a plan that uses clear language, has tangible goals that can support the work we are doing, and have a vision forward and direction that reflects the feedback that we heard. I truly think we got it right!*

*As you read through it, you will see that it revolves around caring, with our patients and families at its heart.*

*Our new Vision, "Together, we care for our patients, our community and each other," reflects what we heard from our patients, their families, and our community.*

*Our Strategic Plan is a guide for the next five years and a foundation for the work we will do to enhance local health care and meet the needs of our community.*

*We are grateful that you are part of our journey.*

*Sincerely,*



**Sabine Mersmann, President and CEO  
Pembroke Regional Hospital**





# Together, we care.

Strategic Plan  
2024-2029



Hôpital Régional de  
**Pembroke**  
Regional Hospital

Our staff, physicians and volunteers have always been the heartbeat of PRH, and this Strategic Plan is a testament to the dedication, resilience, and passion that each one of them brings to our organization. As we look to the future, I am filled with gratitude for the remarkable team we have, and I am confident that the journey ahead will be nothing short of extraordinary.

Development of our five-year plan was a direct result of thoughtful, positive, collaborative engagement with more than 1,000 individuals including members of our health care team, partners, stakeholders, patients and families, and their voices are clearly reflected in the document you see here today.

At its core, this Strategic Plan revolves around caring. Our patients (all who receive services from Pembroke Regional Hospital), their families, as well as the friends, neighbors, and caregivers they consider family are at the heart of our plan. They will remain our focus as we enhance, build upon and shape the services we provide in the days, months and years to come. Pembroke Regional Hospital was built on a foundation of caring by its founders who vowed to address the unmet needs of the community and ensure the population's most vulnerable residents were cared for. While this mission has evolved, it's one we continue to uphold today, and our plan reflects this in so many ways.

As a leader in the field, we are excited about the growth and transformation that is taking place in local health care, and we are humbled by the collaboration and support we have received every step of the way.

Together, we can achieve great things and this Strategic Plan is just the start!

**Sabine Mersmann**  
President and CEO



On behalf of the Board of Directors I am excited to present our hospital's new strategic plan, a plan that will guide us as an organization over the next five years.

Health care needs continue to grow across our region – in particular, the needs of the most vulnerable individuals, those struggling with mental health and addictions issues, chronic diseases and socio-economic challenges. The pandemic drew sharp attention to those who require our attention and care the most. This demands a hospital that is very closely connected with its community. It demands a hospital able to provide an array of excellent services and programs that strive to keep individuals at home and healthy. This plan is not just a document; it is a commitment to continuing to advance the health and well-being of our community with the same dedication that has defined us throughout our history.

The Sisters, with their unwavering compassion and courage, set a profound example for us all. Their legacy continues to inspire our commitment to providing quality care with empathy, dignity, and respect.

The Board of Directors extends our heartfelt thanks to our hospital CEO, Sabine Mersmann, for her exemplary leadership. We are also grateful for the entire PRH team and for all that they do every day to make this hospital an anchor in our region.

We are excited to embark on this journey together focusing on our three goals of caring for our people, caring for our community and caring with our partners.



**David Unrau**

Board Chair





# Mission

We are a regional community hospital committed to delivering a wide range of quality health services. Following Catholic tradition, we will meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of all.

# Vision

Together, we care for our patients,  
our community and each other.

# Values

## Compassion

We believe everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

## Collaboration

We believe in the strength of working together as one team.

## Commitment

We always strive to do better.

## Courage

We believe that being brave will unlock new opportunities and innovations.



# Strategic Pillars





# Care for Our People

We will provide the **best care** for our patients and support to their families by:

Including patients and families in **designing their care**

Providing **learning and growth opportunities** for our staff, physicians and learners

Fostering a **stimulating, motivating and safe work** environment

Embracing and integrating **equity, diversity and inclusion** for our patients and our PRH team

Continuing to **foster innovative models** of team-based care

# Care for Our Community

We will continually **improve the care** we provide by:

**Assessing needs, addressing gaps and seeking opportunities** to improve care, especially for our vulnerable populations

Embracing and implementing **leading practices** across the hospital

**Optimizing** how patients and families navigate their care

Assisting with and **supporting the health of our community**





# Care with Our Partners

We will **improve** the care and support for our community by:

Leading in our work with our **local partners** (*such as primary care, community and long-term care*) to improve care for all, including those with highest unmet needs:

- Mental health and addictions
- Frail elderly
- Unattached patients

Leading in our work with our **regional hospital partners** to optimize access to specialized care close to home:

- Develop communities of clinical practices with our local hospital partners
- Build regional specialized networks of care



# Enablers

## An Authentic and Inclusive Culture

We cultivate a genuine, positive and inclusive organizational culture that is characterized by a welcoming and safe environment. We champion our shared values every day and establish initiatives that promote innovation, inclusivity, teamwork, and a sense of purpose where everyone feels empowered to contribute to high-quality care for our patients and each other.



## Robust Data and Digital Health Capabilities

We enable data and digital health technologies to facilitate efficient decision-making, personalized and improved patient care, and streamlined operational workflow. We emphasize data safety and privacy.



## Open Communication

We engage in clear, comprehensive and transparent communication to ensure that all stakeholders, including staff, physicians, learners, patients and families, the community, and external partners are informed, consulted, and engaged.





## Financial and Environmental Stewardship

We strive to be a resilient and high-functioning hospital through championing responsible and efficient use of resources and environmentally responsible practices. This includes a focus on continuously assessing our environmental impact and promoting eco-friendly initiatives.





THANK  
you!



Dear Town of Annprior,

Thank you so much for the award at  
my high school graduation. Your  
generous support will really help with  
my university education.

Thanks, Parker Bradley

## Oliver Jacob

---

**From:** Jennifer Tracey <jtracey@torontozoo.ca>  
**Sent:** May 23, 2024 9:50 AM  
**To:** Group Annprior  
**Subject:** Toronto Zoo Seeks Your Support



361A Old Finch Ave.  
Toronto, ON. M1B 5K7  
www.torontozoo.com

Tel: 416-392-5900  
info@torontozoo.ca

Dear Mayor McGee,

I am writing to you today to support the campaign by World Animal Protection and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) calling on Municipalities to support and adopt a resolution (attached) to urge the Ontario government to address the longstanding issue around the lack of regulations related to the public display and keeping of exotic wild animal species and the (financial) burden this causes to municipalities.

As one of Canada's leading zoos we are committed to animal wellbeing and welfare *and* public health and safety we want to ensure headlines like the ones below, disappear.

***“Woman attacked by loose one-armed baboon in Ontario, and the push for laws to change”***

Global News, December 13, 2023

***“Search for runaway kangaroo in Ontario continues”***

CP24, December 2, 2023

***“Woman shocked when she sees a lion while walking her dog in Ontario”***

CTV News March 17, 2023

***“Secretly recorded footage exposes conditions at Ontario's roadside zoos”***

CTV W5 November 8, 2022

***“Kangaroo injured in road incident dies, sparking call for more zoo inspections”***

Ottawa Citizen May 3, 2021

We need your help to protect not only non-native (exotic) wild animals being held in unsuitable facilities and private ownership, but also your residents. We are encouraging the Ontario government to restrict the possession, breeding, and use of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals and license zoos to support municipalities and guarantee the fair and consistent application of policy for the safety of Ontario’s citizens and the captive wild animal population.

Ontario is the only province that does not licence or control the keeping of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals. Anyone can keep a tiger, lion, venomous snake or other dangerous animals in their home or start a zoo without professional training, adequate financing, or appropriate facilities. Unfortunately, we have seen firsthand some of these very troubling unsafe, unsanitary, and dangerous situations in Ontario with animals being held in private ownership and at roadside (backyard) zoos. These circumstances were not only unsafe for the animals but posed a significant public safety threat as well.

Since 1974, your Toronto Zoo has played a critical role in saving and protecting species locally and globally and we need your support to further protect captive exotic species in Ontario for animal welfare, public health and safety and environmental reasons.

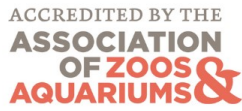
As we celebrate our 50th anniversary this year, we are proud to support World Animal Protection’s campaign. I strongly urge you and your council to support and adopt the resolutions to urge the Ontario government to act. I also want to thank those Municipalities who have already taken steps by passing by-laws restricting exotic animals and/or written to the Government of Ontario supporting provincial regulations.

Thank you in advance for your support and should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [ddejong@torontozoo.ca](mailto:ddejong@torontozoo.ca) or Jennifer Tracey, Senior Director, Strategic Communications & Guest Experience at [jtracey@torontozoo.ca](mailto:jtracey@torontozoo.ca)



Dolf DeJong  
Chief Executive Officer

**ATTACHMENT**



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**[name of municipality] RESOLUTION**  
**Provincial regulations needed to restrict keeping of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals**

**WHEREAS** Ontario has more private non-native (“exotic”) wild animal keepers, roadside zoos, mobile zoos, wildlife exhibits and other captive wildlife operations than any other province; and,

**WHEREAS** the Province of Ontario has of yet not developed regulations to prohibit or restrict animal possession, breeding, or use of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals in captivity; and,

**WHEREAS** non-native (“exotic”) wild animals can pose very serious human health and safety risks, and attacks causing human injury and death have occurred in the province; and,

**WHEREAS** the keeping of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals can cause poor animal welfare and suffering, and poses risks to local environments and wildlife; and,

**WHEREAS** owners of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals can move from one community to another even after their operations have been shut down due to animal welfare or public health and safety concerns; and,

**WHEREAS** municipalities have struggled, often for months or years, to deal with non-native (“exotic”) wild animal issues and have experienced substantive regulatory, administrative, enforcement and financial challenges; and,

**AND WHEREAS** the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), the Association of Municipal Managers, Clerks and Treasurers of Ontario (AMCTO) and the Municipal Law Enforcement Officers' Association (MLEOA) have indicated their support for World Animal Protection’s campaign for provincial regulations of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals and roadside zoos in letters to the Ontario Solicitor General and Ontario Minister for Natural Resources and Forestry;

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT** [given the recent [enter incidents if any]], the [name municipality] hereby petitions the provincial government to implement provincial regulations to restrict the possession, breeding, and use of non-native (“exotic”) wild animals and license zoos in order to guarantee the fair and consistent application of policy throughout Ontario for the safety of Ontario’s citizens and the non-native (“exotic”) wild animal population;

**AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution will be forwarded to all municipalities in Ontario for support and that each endorsement be then forwarded to the Premier of Ontario ([premier@ontario.ca](mailto:premier@ontario.ca)), Ontario Solicitor General ([michael.kerzner@ontario.ca](mailto:michael.kerzner@ontario.ca)), Ontario Minister for Natural Resources and Forestry ([graydon.smith@ontario.ca](mailto:graydon.smith@ontario.ca)) and MPP [name and email address provincial representative], AMO ([amo@amo.on.ca](mailto:amo@amo.on.ca)), AMCTO ([advocacy@amcto.com](mailto:advocacy@amcto.com)), and MLEAO ([mleo@mleo.ca](mailto:mleo@mleo.ca)).





Council - Committee of the Whole

**Resolution #** 2024-147  
**Title:** Resolution seeking support re: Champlain Bridge Rehabilitation  
**Date:** June 4, 2024

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**Moved by:** Councillor Georges Pharand  
**Seconded by:** Councillor Roch St. Louis

**WHEREAS** the Champlain Bridge, located on the King’s Highway 17, west of the Town of Sturgeon Falls in the Municipality of West Nipissing is integral infrastructure to the Trans-Canada Highway network and also serves as a connecting link to Highway 64;

**AND WHEREAS** Highway 17 is a critical link in the Trans-Canada highway network, with Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) of over 14,000 travelers;

**AND WHEREAS** the majority of the traffic is provincial traffic, using the Trans-Canada highway for transporting goods and services in Ontario which, if shut down or restricted, would result in a 123km detour.

**AND WHEREAS** in 2021 an agreement was entered into between the Municipality and the Ministry of Transportation for the design of the rehabilitation or replacement of the Champlain Bridge, which design indicated that the bridge should be replaced at the anticipated cost of \$30,000,000.

**AND WHEREAS** Municipality of West Nipissing does not have the financial resources to undertake a project of this magnitude without assistance;

**AND WHEREAS** the Province has previously recognized the financial burden placed on municipalities, forced to maintain Provincial Infrastructure, by removing the burden of the Don Valley Parkway, and the Gardner Express Way from the City of Toronto;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT** the Province of Ontario recognize the Champlain Bridge as critical provincial infrastructure and assume responsibility for its replacement;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** if the assumption of the Bridge by the province cannot be undertaken, that the Province provide financial and operational assistance to the Municipality of West Nipissing for the undertaking of the replacement of the Champlain Bridge;

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** all northeastern municipalities served by the Highway 17 as well as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO), Rural Ontario Municipalities Association (ROMA), Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) and the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities (FONOM) be requested to support the Municipality of West Nipissing’s request by submitting letters of support to the Ministry of Transportation.

**CARRIED**



Council - Committee of the Whole

Résolution # 2024-147  
Titre: Résolution demandant de l'aide pour la réfection du pont Champlain  
Date: le 4 juin 2024

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Proposé par: Councillor Georges Pharand

Appuyé par: Councillor Roch St. Louis

**ATTENDU QUE** le pont Champlain, situé sur la route royale 17, à l'ouest de la ville de Sturgeon Falls dans la municipalité de Nipissing Ouest, fait partie intégrante de l'infrastructure du réseau routier transcanadien et sert également de lien avec la route 64 ;

**ET ATTENDU QUE** la route 17 est un lien essentiel du réseau routier transcanadien, avec un trafic journalier annuel moyen (TJAM) de plus de 14 000 voyageurs ;

**ET ATTENDU QUE** la majorité du trafic est provincial, utilisant la route transcanadienne pour le transport de biens et de services en Ontario qui, s'il est fermé ou restreint, résulterait en un détour de 123 km.

**ET ATTENDU QU'**en 2021, une entente a été conclue entre la municipalité et le ministère des Transports pour la conception de la remise en état ou du remplacement du pont Champlain, laquelle a indiqué que le pont devrait être remplacé au coût prévu de 30 000 000 \$.

**ATTENDU QUE** la municipalité de Nipissing Ouest n'a pas les ressources financières nécessaires pour entreprendre un projet de cette envergure sans aide ;

**ET ATTENDU QUE** la province a déjà reconnu le fardeau financier imposé aux municipalités, forcées d'entretenir l'infrastructure provinciale, en retirant à la ville de Toronto le fardeau de la promenade Don Valley et de la voie express Gardner ;

**IL EST DONC RÉSOLU QUE** la province de l'Ontario reconnaisse que le pont Champlain est une infrastructure provinciale essentielle et qu'elle assume la responsabilité de son remplacement ;

**IL EST EN OUTRE RÉSOLU QUE** si la province ne peut assumer la responsabilité du pont, qu'elle fournisse une aide financière et opérationnelle à la municipalité de Nipissing Ouest pour le remplacement du pont Champlain ;

**IL EST EN OUTRE RÉSOLU QUE** toutes les municipalités du nord-est desservies par la route 17 ainsi que l'Association des municipalités de l'Ontario (AMO), l'Association des municipalités rurales de l'Ontario (ROMA), l'Ontario Good Roads Association (OGRA) et la Fédération des municipalités du Nord de l'Ontario (FONOM) soient priées d'appuyer la demande de la municipalité de Nipissing Ouest en soumettant des lettres d'appui au ministère des Transports.

**ADOPTÉ**

**From:** Gauthier, Matt <Matt.Gauthier@hamilton.ca>  
**Sent:** June 13, 2024 3:29 PM  
**Cc:** Richardson, Elizabeth; Fernandes, Krislyn; Qureshi, Uzma  
**Subject:** Resolution to Declare the City of Hamilton a "No Paid Plasma Zone"

Good Afternoon,

At its meeting held on June 12, 2024, Hamilton Board of Health/City Council approved the following resolution as part of the Public Health Committee Report 24-005 (June 3, 2024):

**10. Resolution to Declare the City of Hamilton a "No Paid Plasma Zone" (Item 11.1)**

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton supports voluntary blood and plasma donation and aims to protect our public collection system, recognizing the importance of blood donation as a public good;

WHEREAS, Canada's tainted blood crisis resulted in the loss of approximately 8,000 lives and the subsequent Royal Krever Commission recommended Canada operate a fully voluntary, non-remunerated blood and plasma donation system;

WHEREAS, within Ontario's healthcare system blood donations are viewed as a public resource;

WHEREAS, the integrity of the of the public, voluntary donor system must be protected;

WHEREAS, in Ontario, the Voluntary Blood Donations Act, stipulates that it is against the law for private companies to pay donors and for donors to receive payment for their blood or plasma;

WHEREAS, paid plasma collection schemes are known to target and exploit the most vulnerable members of communities; and

WHEREAS, this resolution reaffirms the principles of voluntary, non-remunerated blood and plasma donation and aims to protect the integrity of Canada's public blood system and the integrity of blood donors.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the City of Hamilton designates itself a "Paid-Plasma Free Zone" and declares that private for-profit blood collection companies are not permitted to operate in the city;

- (b) That the City of Hamilton resolves to protect marginalized and vulnerable populations from exploitation resulting from for-profit plasma collection by advertising financial payment for the sale of their blood-plasma; and
- (c) That a copy of this resolution be sent to Canadian Blood Services, federal, provincial and territorial Ministers of Health, Grifols pharmaceuticals, and all Ontario Municipalities requesting that they respect the City of Hamilton as a “Paid-Plasma Free Zone” and support only voluntary Blood and plasma collection.

Kind regards,

**Matt Gauthier**

Legislative Coordinator

Office of the City Clerk

Corporate Services | City of Hamilton

71 Main Street West, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

Hamilton ON L8P 4Y5



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# *The Corporation of the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan*

June 28, 2024

Via Email: [david.piccinico@pc.ola.org](mailto:david.piccinico@pc.ola.org)

Hon. David Piccini M.P.P.  
Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development  
117 Peter Street  
Port Hope, ON  
L1A 1C5

Dear Minister Piccini:

**Re: Regulations for the Importation and Safe Use of Lithium-ion Batteries**

I am writing today to bring to your attention a matter of significant importance to the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan, regarding the importation and safe use of lithium-ion batteries.

At the June 17, 2024 Council Meeting the Fire Chief of the Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan made a presentation to Council on the dangers presented by lithium-ion batteries. The Fire Chief was reporting back from attending the Charged For Life Symposium presented by the Office of the Fire Marshal.

During the presentation, the Fire Chief stressed that the increased importation and use of non-Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) aftermarket batteries is presenting a significant increase in fire and explosion, putting citizens and responding personnel in danger. These after market batteries are not Underwriter Laboratories of Canada (ULC) certified but can be imported into Canada without any associated regulations.

Unlicensed persons and locations can store and modify lithium-ion batteries in our communities without regulations, providing dangerous conditions within a community. Charging these batteries within the home or multi-unit dwellings can result in larger fires with grave results.

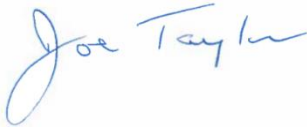
As Canada becomes more aware of Green Energy solutions, these batteries are used more often, increasing the danger to our communities. We support the Ontario Fire Marshal's program to educate citizens on the danger associated with lithium-ion batteries and encourage every municipality to actively promote safe practices for the use of lithium-ion batteries.

We also call upon all levels of government to enact regulations for the importation, sale, storage, and use of non-OEM or ULC certified lithium-ion batteries.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this very critical issue, and I look forward to your prompt consideration and support.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or our Fire Chief if you require any additional information.

Yours truly,  
Township of Otonabee-South Monaghan

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J".

Joe Taylor, Mayor

Cc: MP, Philip Lawrence  
All Ontario Municipalities