

**August 8, 2018**

*Hon. Doug Ford, Premier*

*cc. Hon. Rod Phillips, Minister of Environment, Conservation and Parks*

*Legislative Building, Queen's Park | Toronto, ON | M7A 1A1*



Dear Premier Ford,

Ontarians across the province are experiencing a summer of record-breaking heat waves, floods, forest fires and heat-related human health crises<sup>1</sup>. Like other countries and states around the world, Ontario is experiencing first-hand the uncertainty, expense and loss that result from a changing climate.

As the leader of the provincial government, you have a responsibility to the people of Ontario to do your utmost to safeguard them from these dangers and to ensure these risks don't grow, unchecked, in coming years. Yet your first acts in office have focused on revoking Ontario's existing climate policies<sup>2</sup> while offering no alternative climate plan to replace them.

Canada's primary network of organizations working on climate change and energy issues, Climate Action Network Canada is a coalition of more than 115 organizations operating from coast to coast to coast. Many of our members are based in the province of Ontario.

**We, the undersigned, write to you today to articulate our expectations that:**

- 1. Your government publicly commit to achieving Ontario's existing legislated emissions reduction goals, and;**
- 2. Your government table a detailed, scientifically sound plan to meet these legislated goals as soon as possible.**

Ontario needs a strong, decisive climate plan in place to ensure the province is working hard to reduce its contribution to the global carbon pollution that drives climate change - climate change that is already having very direct and serious impacts on the lives of everyday Ontarians.

The costs for fire suppression, fire- and flood-related property losses, and heat wave-triggered health interventions are contributing to tens of millions of new and growing financial burdens to Ontarians. 831 fires have been recorded as of the first week of August, besting by more than 60% the ten year average of 511 fires per year<sup>3</sup>. Early spring floods

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.thestar.com/opinion/letters\\_to\\_the\\_editors/2018/07/15/global-warming-demands-we-act-now.html](https://www.thestar.com/opinion/letters_to_the_editors/2018/07/15/global-warming-demands-we-act-now.html)

<sup>2</sup> <https://cleaneconomyalliance.ca/a-quick-roundup-of-ontarios-climate-cancellations/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ontario.ca/page/forest-fires>

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## Fires: year to date

The figures below represent the total number of forest fires inside Ontario's fire region for the 2018 fire season, as they compare to the 2017 season and to the ten year average.

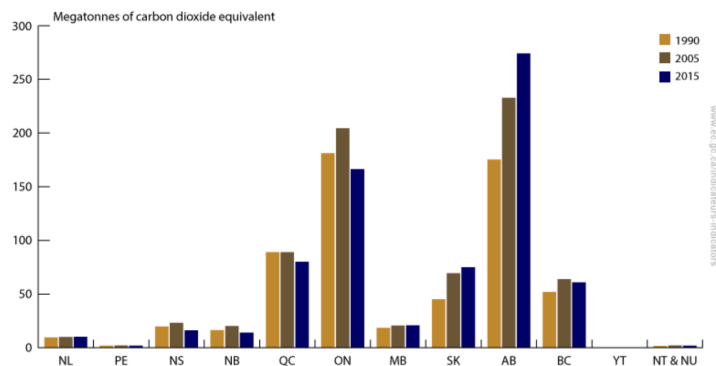


[www.ontario.ca/page/forest-fires](http://www.ontario.ca/page/forest-fires).

this year caused catastrophic damages, declarations of states of emergency, and loss of life in southwestern Ontario<sup>4</sup>. Over \$124 million in insured flooding damage was declared in the Windsor region alone in the one month of August in 2017<sup>5</sup>. Over this Canada Day weekend, we saw the highest yet recorded humidex values for southern Ontario - Ottawa hit humidex values of 47 degrees Celsius<sup>6</sup> - while in neighbouring Quebec, as many as 70 deaths were attributed to the same early July heat wave<sup>7</sup>.

In 2016, the Legislative Assembly of Ontario<sup>8</sup> set ambitious yet achievable emissions reduction targets aligned with the actions of other provinces and states and in line with global objectives<sup>9</sup>. Despite significant progress to date<sup>10</sup>, Ontario remains the country's second most carbon polluting province, after Alberta. We still have our work cut out for us and we call on your government to show the leadership demanded by the climate crisis.

Greenhouse gas emissions by province and territory, Canada, 1990, 2005 and 2015



<https://www.ec.gc.ca/indicateurs-indicators/default.asp?lang=en&n=18F3BB9C-1&wbdisable=true>

We look forward to learning how your government plans to address this issue in a timely manner.

<sup>4</sup> <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2018/02/24/southern-ontario-community-issues-state-emergency-due-flooding/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.abc.ca/on/resources/media-centre/media-releases/late-august-flooding-in-windsor-region-caused-more-than-124-million-in-insured-damage/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/4311444/heat-wave-weather-across-the-world/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://globalnews.ca/news/4321912/quebec-heat-wave-70-deaths-2018/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-41/session-1/bill-172>

<sup>9</sup> Ontario's goals: a reduction in 1990 emissions levels of 15 per cent in 2020, 37 per cent in 2030 and 80 per cent in 2050.

<sup>10</sup> Based on greenhouse gas reporting data, Ontario has met its 2014 target of six per cent below 1990 levels. The province achieved this goal in part by closing all of Ontario's coal-fired electricity-generating stations. This remains one of the single largest greenhouse gas reduction actions implemented to date in North America.

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## Signed,

1. Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment
2. Canadian Interfaith Fast for the Climate
3. Canadian Labour Congress
4. Citizens Climate Lobby Canada
5. Citizens Environment Alliance of Southwestern Ontario
6. Citizens for Public Justice
7. Clean Air Partnership
8. Climate Action Network - Réseau action climat (CAN-Rac) Canada
9. ClimateFast
10. Climate Justice Saskatoon
11. Climate Reality Project Canada
12. Council of Canadians
13. Ecology Action Centre
14. Ecology Ottawa
15. Energy Mix Productions
16. Environmental Defence Canada
17. Équiterre
18. Foundation for Environmental Stewardship
19. Green 13
20. Green Neighbours 21
21. Greenpeace Canada
22. JustEarth
23. KAIROS: Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives
24. National Union of Public and General Employees
25. Noor Cultural Centre
26. Ontario Clean Air Alliance
27. Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation
28. Passive Buildings Canada
29. The Pembina Institute
30. Pipeline Awareness Renfrew County
31. Sierra Club Ontario
32. Stand.Earth
33. Toronto Conference United Church of Canada
34. Toronto Environmental Alliance
35. West Coast Environmental Law
36. Wilderness Committee
37. World Federalist Movement - Canada

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