

Clean Air Program

Smog and Smog Alerts Booklet

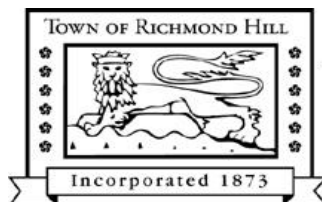
The Town of Richmond Hill Staff and Community
working together to solve a global problem.



The Town of Richmond Hill takes its commitment to protecting the natural environment very seriously. There are a number of programs in which Town employees participate, in an effort to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles. The Town is also encouraging residents and businesses to get involved to make a difference.

Most people do not realize what causes smog or the kind of harm it can inflict. In this booklet, you can learn about smog, smog alerts, what the Town is doing, and how you can make a difference.

You can help reduce car emissions and greenhouse gases by making environmentally friendly choices. Every bit helps!



WHAT IS SMOG?



- It is created by the burning of gas and other fossil fuels. For example, cars.
- Due to the rise in temperature in summer, air pollutants and ground ozone are trapped closer to the earth's surface which then create smog
- Smog is a deadly combination of airborne pollutants that is a result of human activities and habits
- It is harmful to both humans (respiratory and heart problems) and the environment (the heat of the sun burns plants and crops)

WHAT ARE SMOG ALERTS?



- When smog levels are high, a smog alert or Air Quality Advisory is issued.
- It is a warning to all citizens, especially children, the elderly and those with respiratory and heart illnesses, to stay indoors during the hottest parts of the day.
- The Town has incorporated environmentally friendly concepts into policies and procedures.
- The Town has a SMOG Alert Advisory Plan implemented by the Engineering and Public Works Dept. and Parks, Recreation and Culture Dept.
- During these time periods, people should limit the use of oil based paints and cleaners, suspend the use of pesticides and the use of nonessential vehicles etc.

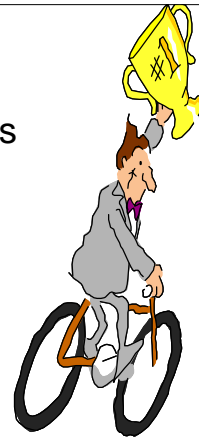
WHAT CAN YOUR FAMILY DO?

- **WALK OR RIDE A BICYCLE:** Driving a short distance (under 1 km) can consume as much as ¼ liter of gas.
- **CARPOOL:** Each car pool can save an average of 2,000 liters of gas a year and almost five tonnes of carbon monoxide.
- **TAKE PUBLIC TRANSIT:** One passenger on public transit produces approx. 8 times less carbon monoxide than a single driver in a car over the same distance.
- **KEEP YOUR TOYS TUNED:** Outboard motors, snowblowers, and lawnmowers all release pollutants that contribute to smog. Change spark plugs and oil regularly to avoid deposit build up.
- **GIVE UP YOUR CAR FOR A WEEK:** To test your ability to get around easily without your car, consider a "No Car Week." Then calculate the savings in money and pollution.



MAKE NEW HABITS

- **GO EASY ON THE A/C:** About 20% of Ontario's power is produced by burning coal which is used to meet peak power demand periods, summer air conditioning is responsible for an increase in smog. Cool your home by planting trees and putting curtains on the windows.
- **KEEP THE A/C TUNED-UP:** Keep your car/home air conditioner tuned and it will use less fuel and electricity.
- **STAY INDOORS ON SMOGGY DAYS:** During a smog alert children, the elderly and people with chronic ailments should remain indoors in late afternoon and early evening when smog levels are highest.
- **TURN OFF THE LIGHTS:** Generating electricity contributes to smog.
- **THINK BEFORE YOU PAINT:** As oil-based paints and other surface coatings dry, they release smog-forming pollutants. Use latex instead.



WHEN YOU MUST DRIVE

- **DON'T DRIVE ON EMPTY:** Driving with extremely low fuel levels increases tailpipe emissions.
- **PLAN YOUR AUTO OUTINGS:** By combining several errands in one trip, save time, fuel and pollutants.
- **WALK YOUR KIDS TO SCHOOL:** Try a group walk to school with parent supervision.
- **PUMP UP YOUR TIRES:** Under-inflated tires increase fuel consumption by up to 15% and shorten tire life.
- **TAKE OUT SOME WEIGHT:** Avoid unnecessary extra weight in the truck and less fuel will be burned as a result.
- **DON'T IDLE:** Switch off the motor even if you are waiting
- **MAINTAIN YOUR VEHICLE:** A poorly tuned vehicle consumes up to 10% more fuel.



WHAT IS THE TOWN DOING?

- The Smog Alert Advisory Program prevents pollution when smog levels are high.
- The Town has participated in Clean Air Commute for a number of years, which is sponsored by Pollution Probe. Many of the Town's employees get to work in environmentally friendly ways during the program and continue when it's over.
- A number of other programs are underway, such as providing special parking areas for carpooling cars, facilities are available for those who bicycle to work, telecommuting allows qualified employees to work from home, flex time allows staff to commute at times other than rush hour.

From this



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to this

Town of Richmond Hill



Working as a community to solve a global problem



Town of Richmond Hill

For more information about smog or the Town's
Clean Air Team:

Website: www.town.richmond-hill.on.ca

Phone: (905) 771 - 8830

This document produced by the Town of Richmond Hill's
Clean Air Initiatives Team. May 2000.