



Clean Air Day

Be part of it!

June 2, 2004
June 8, 2005
June 7, 2006



What is Clean Air Day?

Clean Air Day (CAD) was proclaimed by the Government of Canada to increase public awareness and action on two key environmental priorities, clean air and climate change. It is part of Canadian Environment Week, which was created to promote and to celebrate activities that care and nurture our environmental legacy.

Clean air and climate change

Fossil fuels like oil, natural gas, coal, diesel and gasoline are used throughout our society to heat our homes and buildings, to power our factories, to generate electricity, and to fuel our vehicles. When burned, these fuels produce emissions and airborne particles that are harmful to you and the environment. These also contribute to the build-up of greenhouse gases in our atmosphere which have been linked to climate change.

A special case: the transportation sector

Emissions from the transportation sector are a major contributor to air pollution and climate change. In fact, transportation is one of the single largest sources of air pollution in Canada and is also responsible for about 25% of greenhouse gas emissions. In some urban areas it may account for up to two thirds of all smog forming pollutants. Smog is particularly harmful to the health of children, the elderly and those with cardio-respiratory problems.

The transportation sector covers a large number of different transportation modes. **Sustainable transportation** refers to the modes that provide an alternative to fuel-powered, single occupant vehicles. Walking, cycling, inline skating, carpooling, using the public transit system or telecommuting are all forms of sustainable transportation.

Actions you can take at home at work and on the road

- Save energy in your everyday activities for example, turn off energy-using equipment when it is not in use and use energy-efficient bulbs and appliances.
- Make your home more energy efficient through improved insulation, caulking and weather-stripping. The less energy you use, the less impact you have on the environment.
- Recycle, since it takes much less energy to create a new product using recycled materials than using raw materials.
- Consider trying different ways to use your car less, like walking, carpooling or taking public transit. When you have to use your car to run errands, combine your trips and make every one count.
- Avoid idling your vehicle – ten seconds of idling uses more fuel than restarting your engine.
- Buy locally produced goods whenever possible, to reduce the impact of freight transportation.
- Compost kitchen scraps and yard waste, because organic waste in landfills creates gases that contribute to climate change.
- Plant deciduous trees in locations around your home to provide shade in the summer, but allow light in the winter.
- Buy an electric stove or fireplace, or choose a fireplace that is certified by the Canadian Standards Association (CSA). Most uncertified wood stove releases as many fine particles into the environment in nine hours as a midsize car does in 18,000 km.
- Use small gas-powered machines less often or for shorter periods of time (e.g., mowers, snow-blowers, chainsaws and leaf-blowers). Perform maintenance regularly so that it operates at its optimum (e.g., sharpen blades). When you are ready to purchase a new item, consider a manual appliance or a new generation machine with a less-polluting system.

Clean Air Day – www.cleanairday.com

Clean Air – www.ec.gc.ca/air

Climate Change – www.climatechange.gc.ca

Energy Efficiency – www.see.nrcan.gc.ca

What is the Government of Canada Doing?

In 2000, a federal agenda on Clean Air was launched. This aggressive 10-year Clean Air Agenda focuses on improving air quality in the following five areas: reducing transboundary emissions, reducing transportation sector emissions, reducing major industrial emissions, advancing the science, and engaging the public. These are highlights of accomplishments to date:

- In December 2000, Canada and the United States signed the Ozone Annex to the 1991 Canada-US Air Quality Agreement, which will reduce the transboundary movement of air pollutants causing smog. Recently, the two governments announced they would work together on a number of pilot projects that will contribute to a further reduction of transboundary air pollutants.
- In February 2001, federal government published its 10-year Federal Agenda on Cleaner Vehicles, Engines and Fuels. Since then, the Government has made significant progress in delivering important components of this Agenda, including the adoption of: the *Sulphur in Diesel Fuel Regulations*, *On-Road Vehicle and Engine Emission Regulations* and *Off-Road Small Spark-Ignition Engine Emission Regulations*. These Regulations are aligned with progressive U.S. requirements and together will result in significant reductions in emissions for the benefit of Canadians.
- The federal government is working with the provinces and territories to implement Canada-wide Standards (CWSs) for specific air pollutants including benzene, mercury, dioxins, furans, particulate matter and ozone. This work represents a significant step to protect the health of Canadians and ecosystems and improve air quality.
- The major smog-forming pollutants were added to Canada's National Pollutant Release Inventory (NPRI). Beginning in 2003, information on the emissions of these pollutants by companies and organizations whose facilities meet the NPRI reporting requirements were made accessible to Canadians and publicly reported by Environment Canada.

Personal Vehicle Program – <http://see.nrcan.gc.ca/vehicles/>

Health Issues – www.healthcanada.ca/air

Canadian Environment Week
www.ec.gc.ca/e-week



www.ec.gc.ca/cleanair

- Environment Canada establishes and maintains partnerships to work towards achieving cleaner air for all Canadians. For example, Environment Canada has teamed up on a variety of initiatives with the Canadian Urban Transit Association (CUTA), the Ontario Medical Association, Go for Green, the New Brunswick Lung Association and the Canadian Public Health Association.
- Environment Canada delivers programs such as vehicle emissions inspection clinics and the EcoAction program which support community groups for projects that have measurable, positive impacts on the environment.

Canada – United States Air Quality Agreement, Ozone Annex

www.ec.gc.ca/air/qual/2002/appendixb_e.html

National Pollutant Release Inventory

www.ec.gc.ca/pdb/npri

EcoAction

www.ec.gc.ca/ecoaction

Vehicle Emission Inspection Clinics

www.ec.gc.ca/transport/clinics.htm

Other examples of governmental actions to improve air quality

www.ec.gc.ca/air/gov-efforts_e.html



Join the One-Tonne Challenge

Did you know that the average Canadian produces about 5 tonnes of greenhouse gases every year? Every time we use energy from fossil fuels to power our cars, heat our homes or run our appliances we create greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

Join the One-Tonne Challenge and reduce your greenhouse gas emissions by one tonne – about 20 per cent. You can meet the challenge by using less energy, reducing waste and making smart consumer decisions. You'll save money, protect our climate and help give us cleaner air.

Take action on climate change and join the One-Tonne Challenge today! Get your free copy of the One-Tonne Challenge Guide and try the on-line Calculator to see how many greenhouse gas emissions you produce at www.climatechange.gc.ca

Did you know?

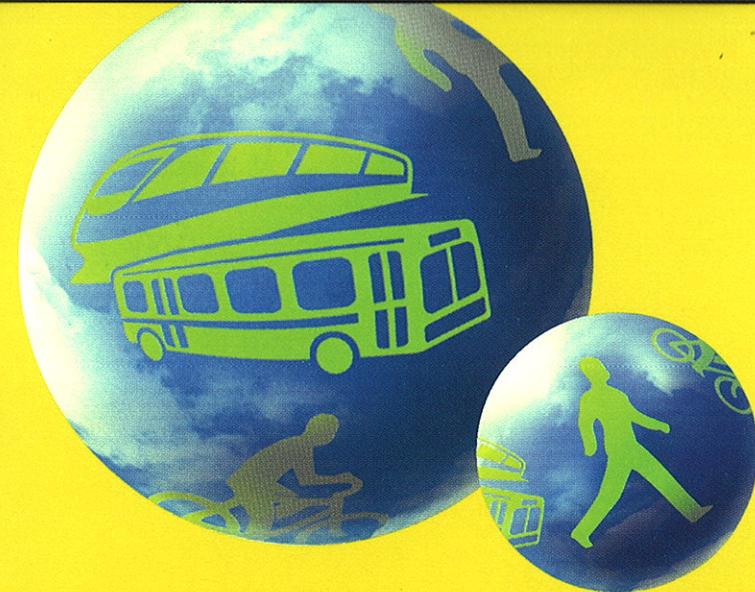
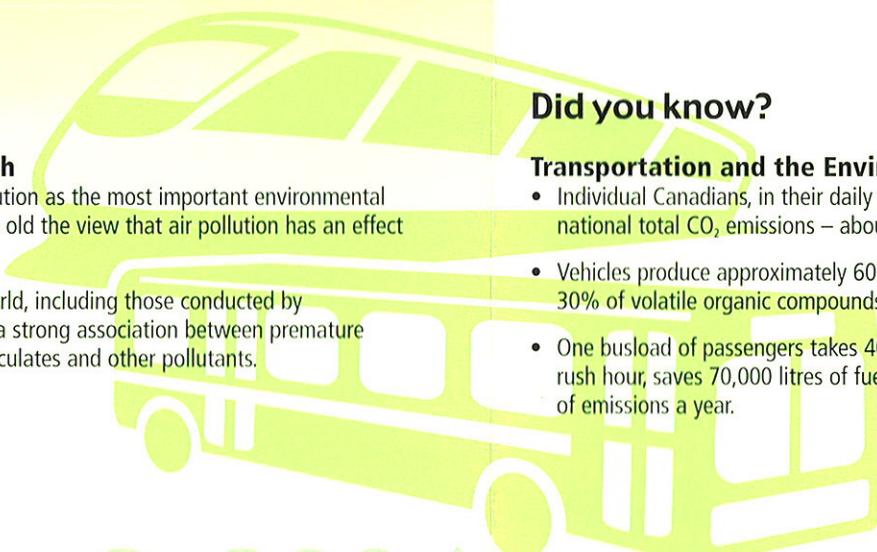
Air Pollution and Health

- Canadians consider air pollution as the most important environmental problem. 93% of Canadians hold the view that air pollution has an effect on health. (Enviroics)
- Studies from around the world, including those conducted by Health Canada have found a strong association between premature mortality and airborne particulates and other pollutants.

Did you know?

Transportation and the Environment

- Individual Canadians, in their daily living, contribute about 25% of the national total CO₂ emissions – about 5 tonnes per person/per year.
- Vehicles produce approximately 60% of nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and 30% of volatile organic compounds (VOC) that contribute to smog.
- One busload of passengers takes 40 vehicles off the road during rush hour, saves 70,000 litres of fuel and avoids over 175 tonnes of emissions a year.



walk • bike • ride



For more information,

call us or email us:
 Environment Canada
 Air Pollution Prevention Directorate –
 Strategies and Coordination Branch
 Phone: **1-800-667-6868**
 e-mail: cad-jap@ec.gc.ca

Take the Commuter Challenge!

The Commuter Challenge is closely connected to **Clean Air Day**. Groups and communities across Canada will encourage the use of sustainable modes of transportation in organising challenges. It's a chance to re-evaluate your commuter habits, to try something new, to be more active or to renew your commitment to the choices you've already made. Help your community win – visit www.commuterchallenge.ca !

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