

Health Vulnerability Assessment: MOHLTC *Guidance and Resources*



Clean Air Partnership
Health Vulnerability Assessments & Climate Resilience Opportunities
November 10, 2017

*Environmental Health Policy and Programs,
Population and Public Health Division,
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care*

Purpose

To provide an overview of the provincial guidance, resources and tools that could be used to facilitate Vulnerability Assessments

Outline:

- Ontario's Public Health System
- Modernization of Ontario Public Health Standards
- Healthy Environments and Climate Change Guideline
- Standardized Approaches and Tools
- Ontario Climate Change and Health Toolkit
- Training Plan for the Public Health Sector



Ontario's Public Health System

- **Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care**

- **Other Ministries**

- Ministry of Labour
- Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change

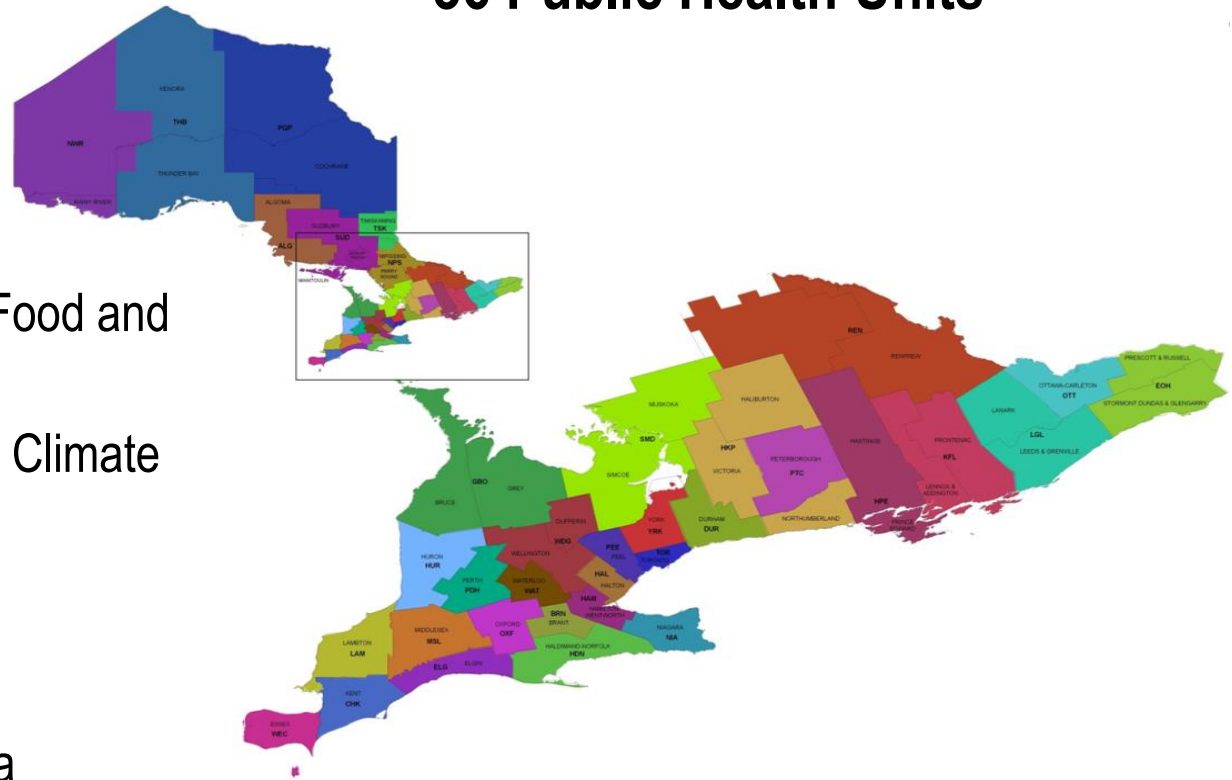
- **Federal Partners**

- Health Canada
- Public Health Agency of Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada

- **Public Health Ontario**

- **Public Health Associations**

36 Public Health Units



444 Municipalities

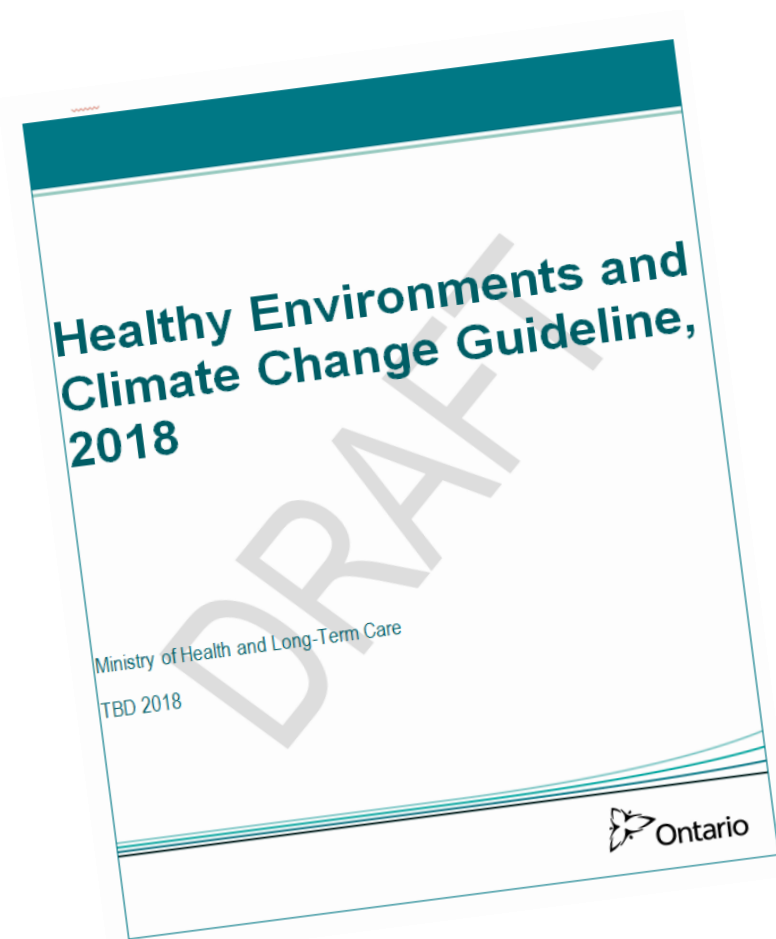
Ontario Public Health Standards Modernization: Healthy Environments Standard

The new *Healthy Environments Standard* will promote population-based activities to minimize the effects of climate change and promote healthy natural and built environments.

The development of the **Healthy Environments and Climate Change Guideline** will enable public health units to work with provincial ministries and local partners to assess risks, including climate change, within their own communities and develop mitigating strategies

Training of public health units in developing strategies using the **Ontario Climate Change and Health Toolkit** will be facilitated by the MOHLTC in partnership with Health Canada, Environment Canada and Climate Change, MOECC and Public Health Ontario

Healthy Environments and Climate Change Guideline



- Proposed requirements include submission for a plan on **Vulnerability Assessments** and how the vulnerabilities would be addressed, with annual progress reports.
- The guideline strengthens population based activities to *proactively* address the impacts of emerging environmental health issues, including the impacts of climate change.
 - *For example, raising awareness about exposure to radon, ultraviolet radiation, PM2.5, etc.*
- The guideline sets the stage for advancing existing healthy built and natural environments initiatives to support standard provincial approaches.
 - *For example, linkages with the Chronic Diseases Standard to identify co-benefits, explore linkages with Ontario's planning framework.*

Standardized Approaches & Tools

The MOHLTC has collaborated with provincial, federal agencies and partners to introduce population-based approaches and tools to address the emerging effects of climate change on the public health system:

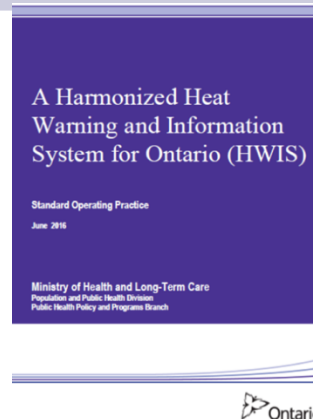


Air Quality Health Index (AQHI)
April 2015

Ontario Climate Change and Health Toolkit July 2016
(Training of PHUs in development)



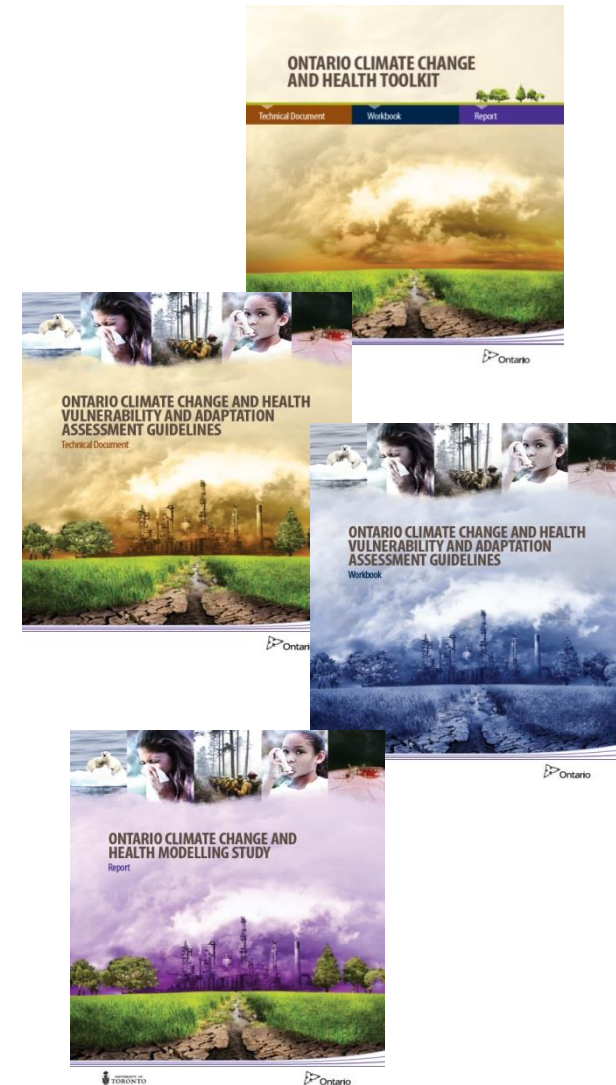
Harmonized Heat Warning and Information System (HWIS)
July 2016



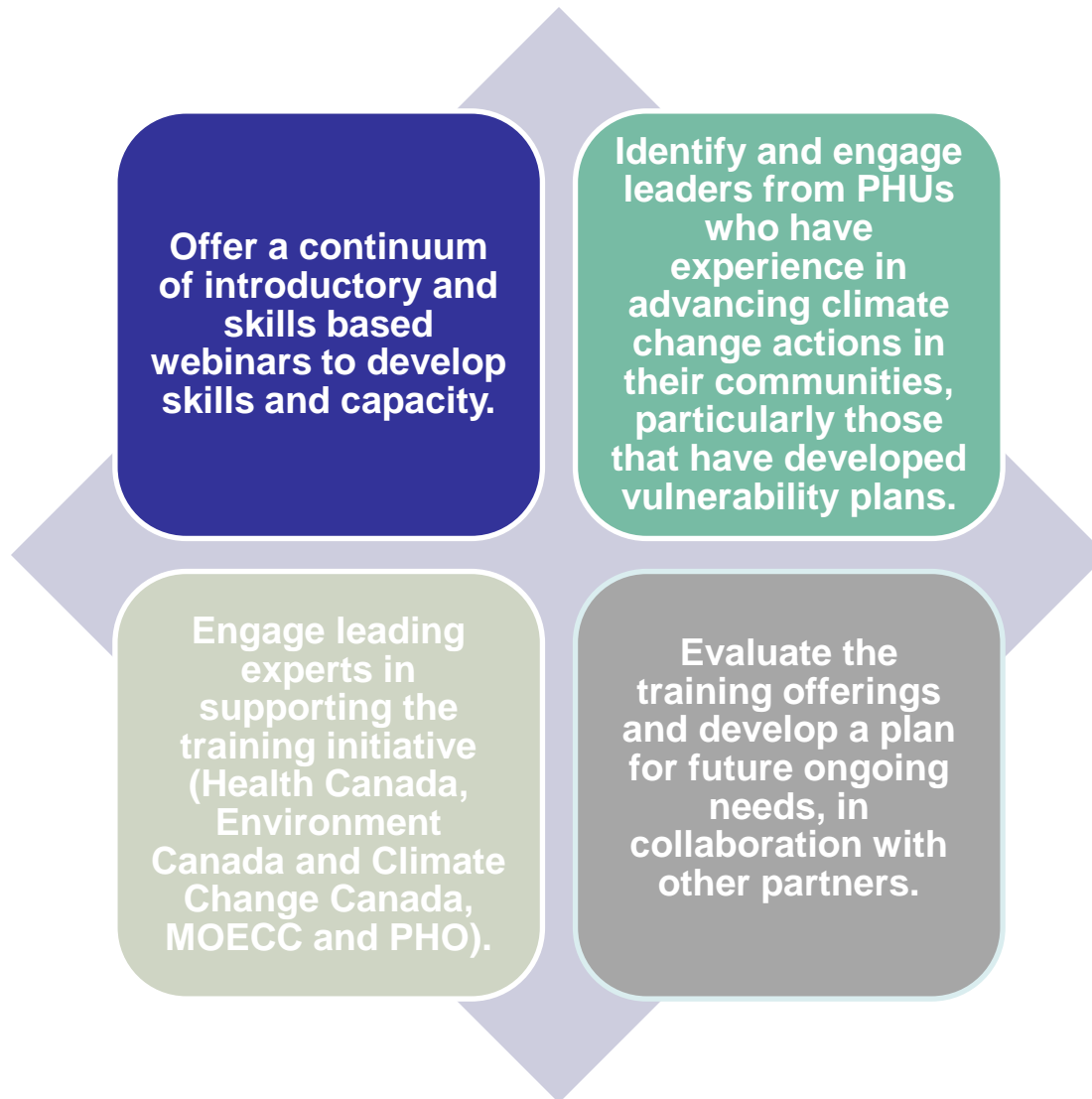
NEW-Standardized Cold Alerting System.
In development
ETD Summer 2018

Ontario Climate Change and Health Toolkit

- Public Health Units are currently engaged in a variety of climate change activities including **research**, **policy development**, and **health promotion**, as reported in a survey conducted in 2016 by the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA).
 - **38 %** were found to have conducted **Vulnerability Assessments**
- **Ontario Climate Change and Health Toolkit (July 2016)** was developed to assist public health units in raising awareness about the potential public health impacts of climate change and to support the broader Ontario Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan. The toolkit is comprised of:
 1. *Ontario Climate Change and Health Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment Guidelines*
 2. *Adaptation and Assessment Workbook*
 3. *Ontario Climate Change and Health Modelling Study*



Training Plan for the Public Health Sector



Training Outcomes

- ✓ Gain understanding of the associations between weather/climate and health outcomes.
- ✓ Identify opportunities to incorporate climate change concerns into existing policies and programs.
- ✓ Assess vulnerability and plan/prepare for adaptation.
- ✓ Collaborate across sectors to promote activities that improve population health in a changing climate.
- ✓ Create Baseline Analysis for monitoring of future changes and risks.

Questions & Comments

Noor Shahid

Environmental Health Policy and Programs

Population and Public Health Division

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care

393 University Avenue, 21st Floor

Toronto ON M7A 2S1

Tel: (416) 326-3114

Noor.Shahid@Ontario.ca

