

**Ministry of  
the Environment**

Office of the Minister

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**Ministère de  
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January 10, 2011

His Worship Rob Burton  
Mayor  
Town of Oakville  
P.O. Box 310  
1225 Trafalgar Road  
Oakville ON L6J 5A6

Her Worship Hazel McCallion  
Mayor  
City of Mississauga  
300 City Centre Drive  
Mississauga ON L5B 3C1

Dear Mayor <sup>Rob</sup>~~Burton~~ and Mayor <sup>Hazel</sup>~~McCallion~~:

I am writing to provide you with an update on the status of the recommendations of the Air Quality Task Force for the Oakville-Clarkson airshed and the ministry's plans for proceeding further.

Let me start by reiterating our government's commitment to continually improving air quality through such actions as phasing out coal-fired generation. This has contributed to significant improvements in Ontario's air.

The forthcoming Ministry of the Environment 2009 Air Quality Report shows a steady drop in significant air pollutants such as particulate matter, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide. For example, in the Greater Toronto Area, levels of fine particulate matter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) – including dust, dirt, soot and smoke – decreased approximately 28 per cent between 2004 and 2009 and, in Oakville, levels decreased by 33 per cent over the same period.

As stated in the Task Force's report, population and economic growth will continue to impact air quality. We will need to continue to reduce emissions from all sources, including residential and transportation, using both traditional and innovative new tools.

I am pleased to provide you with an update on some of the work that is underway to address the recommendations of the Task Force. Our work includes undertaking a review of the effectiveness of the current policy framework in addressing PM<sub>2.5</sub> (which will include an assessment of the need to revise the approach to direct emissions of PM<sub>2.5</sub>). We are finalizing the report on the results of acrolein and VOC sampling for release in early 2011.

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Through the Toxics Reduction Strategy, industry across Ontario is being encouraged to make process changes to reduce the use of toxic substances which will translate into reduced emissions to the environment. We are also collaborating with the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care to explore the feasibility of implementing the Air Quality Health Index across Ontario.

Work is also being initiated to assess locations and develop plans for planting trees on Ministry of Transportation property within the Task Force's study area. As you know, our government is making improvements to public transit such as the PRESTO card, increased parking at GO stations and ways to better accommodate cycling. We have also invested in public transportation through the gas tax and other funding. The \$11.5 billion MoveOntario commitment forms the foundation for Metrolinx Regional Transportation Plan projects.

The MOE has also been working with the federal government, other provinces and territories on a new national approach to air management as announced by the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment (CCME) on October 20, 2010. The proposed new approach is comprehensive and would include more ambitious Canadian air quality standards, nationally consistent industrial emissions standards, and would establish regionally coordinated airsheds and air zones within individual provinces and territories.

I am pleased to say that many of the Task Force's recommendations align with the concepts informing this new national approach. In particular, the CCME's work on air zone management is similar to the Task Force's recommendation for an Air Management System. I also note that many of the recommendations have significant province-wide policy implications. Therefore, whatever action is taken needs to consider the national work underway with the CCME. Our path forward will need to be thoughtful and measured. Our objective is to create an effective air zone management system that works for all of Ontario.

To this end, I would like to extend an invitation for senior operations staff from your municipality to sit down with MOE officials to give thought to how we can work together on air zone management. Please contact Ms. Gail Beggs, my Deputy Minister, at 416-314-6753 or e-mail [gail.beggs@ontario.ca](mailto:gail.beggs@ontario.ca).

Sincerely,



John Wilkinson  
Minister

c: Gail Beggs, Deputy Minister  
Mr. Gary Carr, Regional Chair, Regional Municipality of Halton  
Mr. Emil V. Kolb, Regional Chair, Region of Peel