

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Residents Urged to Protect Themselves During Air Quality and Heat Warnings

Yellow Heat and Yellow/Orange Air Quality Warnings Issued for Region

(July 15, 2026) – [Lakelands Public Health](#) is urging residents of Haliburton, Kawartha, Peterborough and Northumberland to take precautions to protect against heat- and air quality-related illnesses. [Environment and Climate Change Canada](#) has issued Heat and Air Quality Warnings for the region. When both heat and air quality warnings are in place, **most people should prioritize keeping cool.**

Most of the region is under a Yellow [Air Quality Warning](#), while an Orange Air Quality Warning has been issued for Cobourg, Colborne, and Western Northumberland County. The Air Quality Health Index for the region over the next 24 hours ranges from moderate risk (6) to very high risk (10+). Residents are urged to monitor local conditions and take all necessary precautions. In addition, the entire region remains under a Yellow Heat Warning, which was issued on Monday, July 13th.

Both heat and poor air quality can impact the health of anyone, however, some populations may be more vulnerable to health impacts – including the elderly, people with certain medical conditions (e.g., cardiovascular, respiratory), people who are pregnant, and children and infants. People who work or engage in strenuous activity outdoors, and people who are unhoused are also at increased risk. During the warning, it is important to be checking in on friends, family, and neighbours – especially those at higher risk.

Air Quality

The Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is forecasted to reach 10+, or “very high risk” for some parts of the region. Common symptoms of poor air quality include sore and watery eyes, runny nose, sinus irritation, scratchy throat, mild coughing, and headaches. More severe symptoms can include wheezing, chest pains, or severe coughs. **If you think you are having a medical emergency, call 9-1-1.**

To help reduce your health impacts from poor air quality:

- When indoors, keep windows and doors closed as much as possible
- Using a certified portable air cleaner and/or the highest-quality air filter that your ventilation system can, may help protect indoor air
- If you are at higher risk:
 - Avoid strenuous activities outdoors
 - Consult your primary care provider about how to protect your health
- Reduce or reschedule strenuous outdoor activities, especially if you experience symptoms such as coughing or throat irritation
- Check the [Air Quality Health Index](#) forecast daily
- If there is wildfire smoke in the area, wearing a well-constructed, well-fitting, and properly worn respirator type mask (e.g. N95) can reduce your exposure to the fine particles in the smoke

Heat

Heat-related illnesses include dehydration, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. If you are experiencing heat exhaustion, move to a cool space and drink water. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- tiredness and weakness
- dizziness and/or fainting
- rash
- nausea or vomiting
- extreme thirst
- headache
- decreased urination with unusually dark yellow urine

Heat stroke is a medical emergency. If you or someone you are caring for shows the symptoms below, call 9-1-1 immediately:

- body temperature over 39°C (102°F)
- hot, red skin that may feel dry
- throbbing headache
- dizziness/fainting or passing out
- severe nausea or vomiting
- trouble speaking clearly
- unusual coordination
- fast breathing or faint, fast heartbeat
- confusion or disorientation
- very little dark urine

To help reduce your risk of heat-related illnesses:

- Stay hydrated; drink lots of water even if you don't feel thirsty.
- Avoid going out during the hottest time of the day and avoid direct sun.
- Wearing loose-fitting, light-coloured clothing.
- Avoid strenuous outdoor physical activity.
- Keep your home cooler by:
 - Closing blinds and curtains
 - Turning off heat-generating lights or appliances
 - Preparing meals that don't use your oven
- Never leave people or pets inside a parked vehicle or in direct sunlight.
- Contact your local municipality to ask about designated public cooling centres or visit public spaces such as libraries or malls that are air conditioned, or local beaches and splash pads.

Currently, daytime highs are forecasted to reach up to 37° C, with a humidex in the mid-40s. Overnight lows are expected to remain above 20°C, providing little relief from the heat. The heat event is expected to end Thursday, July 16.

Find more information, tips, resources, local Climate Change and Vulnerability Health Assessments, and active local heat alerts at LakelandsPH.ca/Heat.

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About Lakelands Public Health

Lakelands Public Health is the public health agency that is proud to serve Alderville, Curve Lake and Hiawatha First Nations, the Urban Indigenous Community, the Counties of Haliburton, Northumberland, City of Kawartha Lakes and Peterborough City and County. It is through our relationships and valued partnerships that Lakelands Public Health strives to protect health, prevent illness, injury, all while promoting overall well-being for all who live, work and learn in the region.

Established through the voluntary merger of the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit and Peterborough Public Health, Lakelands Public Health combines local knowledge, public health expertise, and a strong community focus to deliver programs and services that respond to local needs. These include infectious disease prevention and control, healthy living initiatives, environmental health, school and family health programs, and emergency preparedness. For more information, visit LakelandsPH.ca.