



July 28th, 2026

Dear Mississauga City Council,

On behalf of Peel ACORN, we are writing to express our strong and urgent support for the notice of motion (Item #16.2) regarding expanding cooling requirements and cooling amenity spaces in apartment buildings.

ACORN (Association of Organizations for Reform Now), Canada is a mass membership organization of low- and moderate-income tenants fighting for social and economic justice. Our members live in the very buildings this motion aims to protect: older apartments and low-income rental housing that systematically lack proper cooling infrastructure. For years, ACORN has been organizing with tenants across the country for protections from extreme heat.

Today, we are urging Mississauga City Council to pass this motion as it is an important step in recognizing that indoor cooling is not a luxury—it is a matter of basic human survival.

The Reality of Extreme Heat for Low-Income Tenants

The climate crisis is no longer a distant threat; it is an active public health emergency. The years 2023, 2024, and 2025 were the three hottest years ever recorded in human history. Two weeks ago it was 48 degrees. When outdoor temperatures climb, older, poorly insulated apartment buildings act as heat traps. Hot air becomes trapped indoors and continues to rise, meaning that even when temperatures drop outside overnight, apartments remain dangerously hot for extended periods.

Our members report routinely living in indoor temperatures that exceed 30°C. Tenants are forced to stop using their stoves or ovens out of fear of making their homes hotter, suffer from profound sleep deprivation because their bedrooms do not cool down at night, and experience severe respiratory distress due to trapped humidity and poor indoor air quality.

For low-income tenants, there is no escape. Many of our members:

- **Cannot afford the upfront cost** of buying an air conditioning unit.
- **Cannot afford the soaring electricity bills** required to run an AC unit even if they own one.
- **Do not have control over the cooling of their building** to install central air or high-powered cooling units in their apartments.

In 2025, ACORN Canada published a national report, "[Crumbling Apartments in a Warming World: Tenants in an Energy Cost Crisis](#)," which surveyed over 700 low- and moderate-income tenants across the country. It found:



- **44% of tenants surveyed lack access to air conditioning**, with 46% citing the exorbitant cost of purchase or operation as the primary barrier.
- **Only 9% of respondents** said they were *not* impacted by extreme indoor heat.
- **Severe physical symptoms** are widespread: 74% suffered from prolonged sleep deprivation, 66% experienced chronic fatigue, and 48% dealt with severe headaches.
- **Poor building maintenance worsens the heat:** 54% of tenants explicitly reported that their units become unbearably hot in the summer, and 33% have absolutely no way to control their unit's temperature.

The Severe Health Impacts of Indoor Extreme Heat

Health Canada explicitly warns that indoor temperatures remaining above **26°C** are unsafe, particularly for older adults, children, and those with chronic health issues. When a tenant's body cannot maintain its core temperature, the physiological toll is catastrophic:

- **Heart:** The heart is forced to pump drastically faster and harder to move blood to the skin for cooling, drastically increasing the risk of heart attacks, heart failure, and dangerous drops in blood pressure.
- **Kidneys:** Severe dehydration reduces blood flow and concentrates toxins, leading to acute kidney injury (AKI) or full kidney failure.
- **Brain:** High core body temperatures can break down the blood-brain barrier, causing swelling, confusion, seizures, and potentially fatal heat stroke.
- **Gut & Liver:** Reduced blood flow makes the gut "leaky," allowing toxins to spill into the bloodstream while the liver suffers direct cellular damage.
- **Muscles:** Muscle tissue breaks down (rhabdomyolysis), releasing dangerous proteins into the bloodstream that clog and further damage the kidneys.

We must learn from history. During the 2021 BC Heat Dome event, **619 people lost their lives**, making it the deadliest weather event in Canadian history. Crucially, **98% of those deaths occurred indoors**.

Peel ACORN's Campaign Demands & Support for the Motion

To protect Mississauga tenants, Peel ACORN strongly supports this motion and demands the following actions:

1. **Enact a Maximum Indoor Temperature By-law:** The City must establish a property standard that mandates a maximum indoor temperature of **26°C** across all rental units, serving as the mirror image of winter minimum heat standards.
2. **Local program to provide free air conditioning for low income tenants:** Mississauga should follow the lead of Toronto and Hamilton who have created



municipal programs to support low-income and heat vulnerable tenants with the cost of getting an air conditioning unit.

The status quo is dangerous, inequitable, and carries a high financial and human cost for the City of Mississauga. While low-income tenants are the least responsible for the climate crisis, they bear the brunt of its deadliest effects.

We urge you to pass this motion with the absolute urgency it warrants. Do not wait for a preventable tragedy to occur in Mississauga's apartment buildings before taking decisive action. Give Mississauga tenants the dignity, health protections, and safety they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

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Peel ACORN

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