



TO: Chair and Members of the Board of Health

FROM: Christopher Mackie, Medical Officer of Health / Chief Executive Officer

DATE: 2017 November 16

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## SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORT FOR NOVEMBER

### **Recommendation**

*It is recommended that the Board of Health receive Report No. 063-17 re: Summary Information Report for November for information.*

#### **Key Points**

- The [Burden of Occupational Cancer in Ontario](#), published by Cancer Care Ontario and the Occupational Cancer Research Centre, makes evidence-based policy recommendations for Ontario's occupational health and safety system, employers, non-governmental organizations and the Ontario Government to take action to prevent occupational exposure to carcinogens.
- In 2016, \$56,080 [Harvest Bucks](#) were distributed by 41 community programs to 1,536 households with a redemption rate of 83% (\$46,682).

### **The Burden of Occupational Exposure to Carcinogens**

The [Burden of Occupational Cancer in Ontario](#), published by Cancer Care Ontario (CCO) and the Occupational Cancer Research Centre (OCRC), is the sixth report in Cancer Care Ontario's *Cancer Risk Factors in Ontario* series. This report focuses on the most common known or suspected carcinogens found in Ontario workplaces and their contribution to the burden of occupational cancer. This report is important because it quantifies the extent of exposure and helps to highlight that, with the enactment of suggested policy changes and workplace-based health protective measures, exposure could be prevented and the burden of occupational cancer could be reduced. The report profiles evidence for 11 major carcinogens to which a large number of Ontario workers are exposed and contribute most to the burden of occupational cancer. These carcinogens include solar ultraviolet radiation, asbestos, diesel engine exhaust, Crystalline Silica and environmental tobacco smoke. It is recommended that these cancer-causing agents be prioritized for exposure prevention and policy controls because they represent the best opportunity for maximizing public health impact. In fact, as stated by CCO and the OCRC, solar ultraviolet radiation, radon and PM2.5 account for over 90 per cent of the total estimated environmental burden of cancer in Ontario. Other carcinogens of interest include sedentary work, pesticides and shift work involving circadian disruption. The report intends to raise awareness, facilitate discussion and create change across the Ontario Government Ministries of Labour, Health and Long-Term Care, Environment and Climate, Transportation and Infrastructure with the goal of preventing future occupational cancers by:

- Strengthening occupational exposure limits based on the most up to date evidence of health effects;
- Reducing or eliminating the use of toxic substances;
- Creating registries of workers exposed to occupational carcinogens for improved monitoring and surveillance; and,
- Broadening current occupational health and safety legislation to better protect workers in the construction and trades industry.

This report will be a helpful resource for Health Unit staff to inform future program and policy direction that aims to reduce the incidence and burden of cancer in Ontario.

### **Harvest Bucks**

Only 37% of Middlesex-London residents eat vegetables and fruit five or more times a day. [Harvest Bucks](#), a vegetable and fruit voucher program coordinated by the Health Unit, helps to increase local access to and consumption of vegetables and fruit while promoting community connectedness through the farmers' market experience. In 2016, \$56,080 Harvest Bucks were distributed by 41 community programs to 1536 households with \$46,682 redeemed (83%). Compared to 2015, this is an 80% increase in the amount of Harvest Bucks distributed and an increase of 20 community programs receiving Harvest Bucks for distribution. The program continues to grow as we have already surpassed these numbers for the current 2017 cycle. The Harvest Bucks 2016 infographic is attached to this report as [Appendix A](#).



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