



May 08, 2026

Ms. Lindsay Jones, Executive Director  
Association of Municipalities of Ontario  
By email to: [ljones@amo.on.ca](mailto:ljones@amo.on.ca)

Dear Ms. Jones,

**Re. Proposed collaboration on maximum temperature bylaws**

I am writing to explore collaboration between the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Registered Nurses' Association of Ontario (RNAO) on maximum indoor temperature bylaws. RNAO is the professional association representing more than 57,000 registered nurses, nurse practitioners and nursing students across Ontario.

For many years, RNAO has advocated for maximum temperature standards in health-care settings to protect workers and patients. More recently, we have extended this advocacy to residential tenancies.

Evidence shows our climate is unsafe for many. Extreme heat drives up emergency department visits and hospital admissions. Children, seniors, people with chronic heart and lung conditions, people living with disabilities, those taking medications that affect heat regulation, and individuals who are socially isolated are particularly vulnerable. Risk is further shaped by income and housing conditions – disproportionately affecting tenants in dense, lower-income urban neighborhoods where asphalt, concrete and poorly designed buildings trap and intensify heat.

Tenants with these health risks face the greatest danger in their own homes. In British Columbia, the coroner found 98 per cent of deaths and hospital visits during the 2021 heat wave were linked to extreme temperature exposure inside buildings. Many dwellings – designed to retain heat rather than dissipate it and lacking mechanical cooling – were hotter than outdoors and failed to cool overnight.

The urgency is growing. Globally, the past 11 years have been the hottest on record, and Canada is warming faster than the global average. While northern regions are especially affected, urban Ontario is also feeling the impact. Last summer, Toronto recorded 24 days above 30°C and five above 35°C. Communities across southern Ontario experienced similar conditions. Notably, this was not the hottest summer on record – several recent summers had higher average temperatures.

We urge municipalities to act to ensure tenants remain safe in their homes during extreme heat. RNAO stands ready to support municipalities considering maximum indoor temperature bylaws. We commend Toronto and Hamilton for recent steps and encourage councils to move quickly to protect those most at risk.

At the same time, municipalities cannot do this alone. Effective standards require a central role for the Ontario government – setting province-wide requirements, funding retrofits and ensuring enforcement capacity. Retrofits should prioritize high-efficiency heat pumps to provide cooling while supporting the transition away from fossil gas. RNAO is ready to support AMO's advocacy with

the Ontario government, so it engages constructively and provides the leadership and resources municipalities need.

RNAO is also interested in exploring additional areas of collaboration with AMO. From a nursing perspective, communities across Ontario are facing critical health-care challenges that compromise access and continuity of care – including limited access to primary care, shortages across the health workforce, and emergency department closures. We are keen to work together on joint, system-level solutions that improve access and strengthen community care.

I would welcome the opportunity to meet and discuss advancing tenant health and safety across Ontario, as well as other areas of collaboration. Please contact me at [dgrinspun@RNAO.ca](mailto:dgrinspun@RNAO.ca), copying Dr. Alanna Coleman, Associate Director, Nursing & Health Policy at [acoleman@rnao.ca](mailto:acoleman@rnao.ca), and executive scheduler Shannon Holcomb at [sholcomb@rnao.ca](mailto:sholcomb@rnao.ca) to identify a convenient time.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doris Grinspun". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Dr. Doris Grinspun RN, BScN, MSN, PhD, LLD(hon), Dr(hc) DHC DHC, FAAN, FCAN, O.ONT  
RNAO CEO

Copy to:

Alicia Neufeld, AMO Policy Director ([ANEufeld@amo.on.ca](mailto:ANEufeld@amo.on.ca))