

CAPE Preventing Toxic Exposures Program Activities 2023

CAPE's Toxics Program aims to prevent toxic exposures by getting at the root causes. In a context where chemical pollution has exceeded safe planetary thresholds, CAPE addresses the health risks to all and recognizes that disproportionate harms and impacts are experienced by vulnerabilized populations and advocates for policy changes to the benefit of everyone. The program works in coalitions and with partners to raise awareness, establish connections between toxic exposures and climate change, campaign for more robust environmental legislation, and advocate for environmental justice.

Top achievements:

- Launched a new landing page for the [Preventing Toxics Exposures Program](#)
- Reached a landmark victory with the federal government's passage of Bill S-5, which modernized Canada's leading environmental law, the Canadian Environmental Protection Act (CEPA). Through our [CEPA Reform Campaign](#) we were able to influence amendments that included provisions for environmental justice, intergenerational equity, and securing the right to a healthy environment under federal law.
- With the addition of a new staff member in the Toxics Program, launched the "[Place-Based Power Project](#)" in partnership with Keepers of the Water and Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition to amplify the health and justice impacts of extraction activities, specifically fracking in Northern B.C. and tar sands tailing ponds in AB and NWT
- Made numerous submissions to the government and committees, provided expert witness testimony, and contributed to various campaigns including on Bill S-5 and the campaign supporting [Bill C-226 to redress environmental racism and for environmental justice](#).
- Sent thousands of emails, lobbied MPs and Senators, made several formal submissions to government and engaged in public discourse on various issues such as fracking, glyphosate and pesticides, air quality, plastics, toxic substances in cosmetic products and children's toys, and much more.
- Published op-eds to address various toxic exposures and environmental issues. Had influential media coverage in major publications across the country (CBC News, Toronto Star, Vancouver Sun, Ottawa Citizen) and produced informative video series and social media content.
- Participated in multiple public engagements in the effort to ban the herbicide glyphosate, including in support of a parliamentary petition which garnered over 18,000 signatures.

OpEds:

1. [From a summertime of sadness to a symphony of actors | Canada's National Observer: News & Analysis](#)
2. [It's not all pretty in pink: To prevent breast cancer, let's stop missing the forest for the trees - Healthy Debate](#)
3. [Hidden tailings leak reveals ongoing environmental racism in Canada](#)
4. [Opinion: Ottawa and the provinces must work together on air pollution | Edmonton Journal](#)
5. [Guest column: It's time for action on improving air quality | Windsor Star](#)

Media Coverage:

1. [Air pollution is changing how our brain functions, researchers at UBC, UVic find | CBC News](#)
2. [CAPE Lobby Day](#)
3. [Doctor group files health complaint against controversial trucking route | CBC News](#)
4. [Local emissions standards will add to trucking challenges](#)
5. [Climate Panel: environmental racism and fueling a carbon-free future | The Early Edition with Stephen Quinn | Live Radio | CBC Listen](#)
6. [Are diesel school buses harming kids? Why replacing them with electric could have health and psychological benefits](#)
7. [Long ride ahead for Canada's transition to electric school buses - The Weather Network](#)
8. [Coalition calls for Canada to ban glyphosate use - rabble.ca](#)
9. [Exposed: Hidden health risks lurk in the air Canadians breathe every day | Canada's National Observer: Climate News](#)
10. [Hidden tailings leak reveals ongoing environmental racism in Canada](#)
11. [Clean air and bold climate action is health care | Canada's National Observer: News & Analysis](#)
12. [How to better protect yourself from the health effects of wildfire smoke | CBC News](#)
13. [Environmental and health advocates endorse update to Environmental Protection Act, but also call for promised second bill - The Hill Times](#)
14. [Wildfire Smoke Is Making Us Sick | The Tyee](#)
15. [Reactive to proactive: A push for a national campaign on wildfire education in Canada](#)
16. [Canada's main environmental law gets a facelift](#)
17. [Bill S-5 Strengthens Canada's Environmental Protection | Mirage News](#)
18. [Ottawa lifts pause on increasing pesticide residue limits on food](#)
19. [How to Protect Yourself from Poor Air Quality](#)
20. [Feds pass update to Canadian Environmental Protection Act - Pique Newsmagazine](#)
21. [Federal petition calls on Canada to close truck pollution loophole - Environment | Business in Vancouver](#)
22. [Lawn grass as an expression of colonialism, classism and corporate control - rabble.ca](#)
23. [Wildfire smoke is spreading again. Here's how you can protect your health | CBC News](#)
24. [Windsor public forum to discuss local action on air quality, climate change](#)
25. [Canada is 'among the worst' for pesticide rules](#)

Blog Posts & Newsletter Stories:

1. [CAPE Is in the House!](#) , March 28, 2023
2. [World Environment Day, It's time to "BeatPlasticPollution to protect the environment, our health and worker safety](#), June 5, 2023
3. [Bill S-5, Strengthening Environmental Protection for a Healthier Canada Act Received Royal Assent](#), June 21, 2023
4. Updates in each of CAPE's [quarterly newsletters and special mailings](#)

Letters, Briefing Notes and Submissions:

1. [Joint letter calling for the banning of more single-use plastic items: Expand the Ban \(January 2023\)](#)
2. [Backgrounder: Expand the Ban 2023 \(January 2023\)](#)
3. [CAPE Lobby Day Bill S-5 Leave-Behind, February 16, 2023](#)
4. [Sustainable Agriculture Strategy Discussion Document: CAPE Submission \(March 2023\)](#)
5. [Expedite S-5 Letter to House Leaders, March 24, 2023](#)
6. [Support G-6: Right to a healthy environment, action on air quality and toxics, April 4, 2023](#)
7. [Moving forward on CEPA modernization: Key provisions in Bill S-5](#)
8. [Report Stage Motions on Bill S-5, Letter to Minister Guilbeault, May 3, 2023](#)
9. [Into the Weeds: Testimonials by CAPE's Dr. Warren Bell, and Jane McArthur toxics program director \(May 2023\)](#)
10. [Comments: Draft state of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances \(PFAS\) report and risk management scope](#)
11. [Comments re: Pollution prevention planning notice for primary food plastic packaging \(August 30, 2023\)](#)
12. [Comments re: NOI to amend PCPR – ENGO joint comments \(September 8, 2023\)](#)
13. [Hazard Labelling Joint Submission CAPE, ED, WHEN, BCAQ \(October 20, 2023\)](#)
14. [CropLife's role in public policy development – letter to ministers \(October 20, 2023\)](#)
15. [Request for Special Review of Mancozeb Under the Pest Control Products Act \(November 7, 2023\)](#)

Press Releases:

1. [MP committee fails to establish timelines for action on toxic chemicals - CAPE](#)
2. [House of Commons must make passing Bill S-5 a priority - CAPE](#)
3. [Thousands of Canadians, led by celebrated filmmaker Jennifer Baichwal and supported by author Margaret Atwood, call for glyphosate ban and political accountability for pesticide reduction](#)
4. [Groups Call for Senate Vote on Environmental Racism Bill Before Summer Recess](#)
5. [MPs pass long-awaited legislation to tackle environmental racism in Canada - CAPE](#)
6. [MPs pass first major update to Canada's most important environmental law in more than two decades - CAPE](#)
7. [Climate change is a "health emergency", say Canadian health associations to new Minister of Health as wildfires continue - CAPE](#)
8. [CAPE responds to federal court ruling on Government's listing of plastic as toxic](#)

New Mode Actions & Petitions:

1. "Take Action to Strengthen Canada's Most Important Environmental Law!": English Submissions: 2092, French Submissions: 130
2. "Strengthen Canada's pollution prevention law! Please support amendments to Bill S-5 to update CEPA (ENVI ridings only)": English Submissions: 96, French Submissions: 9
3. "Take Action Against Pesticides": English Submissions: 221, French Submissions: 37
4. [Parliamentary e-petition](#) to ban glyphosate and develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce pesticides: 18000+ signatures, presented in the House of Commons May 2, 2023

Lobby Day:

CAPE Lobby Day on the Hill, Culmination of the Advocacy and Mobilization Program Cohort 1, February 16, 2023.

Lobby Day activities included

- 30 AMP participants
- 26 Parliamentarians and their staff
- 5 CAPE staff
- 19 of the meetings included presentations on CEPA Reform and Bill S-5 Strengthening Amendments

Witness Testimony Appearances:

1. Dr. Melissa Lem, Re: Bill S-14: [Meetings #55 - Standing Senate Committee on Energy, the Environment and Natural Resources \(44th Parliament, 1st Session\)](#)

Presentations, Webinars and Events:

1. [Into the Weeds Special Screening and Panel](#), Dr. Melissa Lem, February 24, 2023
2. [Addressing Environmental Racism in Canada](#), For the Love of Creations Webinar, April 12, 2023
3. An Update on CEPA Reform, CAPE [BC Committee](#) Monthly Meeting, April 19, 2023
4. [Into the Weeds Ottawa Press Conference](#), Video Testimonials presented by Dr. Warren Bell, Jane McArthur, May 2, 2023
5. Introduction to the CAPE Toxics Program, [Advocacy and Mobilization Program Opening Conference](#), September 22, 2023
6. CAPE CEPA Reform Campaign Update, CAPE [BC Committee](#) Monthly Meeting, September 13, 2023
7. [Controlling Toxics for our Health and the Planet](#), Community Foundations of Canada, September 28, 2023
8. [What's the Fuss About Air Quality?](#), Windsor Essex On Watch WTF Webinar Series, October 17, 2023
9. Healthy Planet, Healthy People: Oral and Written Advocacy in the CAPE Toxics Program, [St. Clair College Social Justice and Legal Studies Seminar](#), October 23, 2023
10. [Federal Environmental Law: Celebrating the Wins and Looking Ahead](#), Climate Emergency Conference, Building a Healthy Future, October 28, 2023
11. [Air Pollution and Health: How CAPE Uses Evidence for Change](#), SOCAAR Webinar Series, November 1, 2023
12. Healthy Planet, Healthy People: Preventing Toxic Exposures, [Advocacy and Mobilization Program Seminar](#), November 8, 2023
13. Coalition for Toxics Annual Meeting, November 16, 2023
14. Preventing Toxic Exposures Program: History, Current Understandings & Vision, CAPE [Annual General Meeting](#), November 25, 2023

Reports:

1. Contributed to ["Left Holding the Bag: A Survey of Plastic Packaging in Canada's Grocery Stores"](#)

Place Based Power Project Launch:

- 3 external partner meetings (1x Keepers of the Water, 1 x Skeena Watershed Conservation Coalition, 1 x KoW and SWCC)
- 2 CAPE community meetings (with Dr's Joe Vipond, John O'Conner, and Courtney Howard and Drs Margaret McGregor and Tim Takaro)
- Sharing of project description during CAPE AGM
- Creation and sharing of project description and workplan with partners
- Began planning in-person workshops for Northern BC and Northern Alberta/NWT with project partners
- Creation of project website (in progress)
- Began compilation of Western and Indigenous knowledge sources on the health and social justice impacts of fracking and tar sands tailings ponds
- Initial outreach with health associations and organizations in Canada to generate interest in future collaborative advocacy efforts
- Solidifying connections and engaging with existing coalitions working on the issues of concern to the project
- Developing considerations for advocacy strategy including potential to leverage Canadian Environmental Protection Act updates resulting from Bill S-5 (e.g. implementation of the right to a healthy environment, additional authority to request information regarding releases of substances specifically references hydraulic fracturing and tailings ponds) as well activities under the Environmental Justice Strategy being developed in expectation of the passage of Bill C-226.

Coalition/Partner and Campaign Participation:

- [Coalition for Action on Toxics \(CAT\)](#) (with Ecojustice, Environmental Defense, David Suzuki Foundation, Breast Cancer Action Quebec)
- [Canadian Association of Nurses for the Environment](#)
- ENGO Pesticides Coalition
- [Pest Management Regulatory Agency \(PMRA\) Transformation Agenda](#) Stakeholder
- [Coalition for Environmental Rights](#)
- [Canadian Coalition for Environmental and Climate Justice \(CCECJ\)](#)
- [Canadian Partnership for Children's Health and Environment \(CPCHE\)](#)
- [Healthy Environments for Learning Day \(HELD\)](#)
- [Environmental Noxiousness, Racial Inequities & Community Health \(ENRICH\) Project](#)
- [Into the Weeds Action on Glyphosate Campaign](#)
- [National Pollutant Release Inventory \(NPRI\) Working Group](#)
- University of Toronto [Community Research Partnerships in Ethics](#)
- [Prenatal Environmental Health Education \(PEHE\) Collaboration](#)
- [Green Budget Coalition \(GBC\)](#)
- Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care
- Canadian Environmental Law Association
- Canadian Medical Association
- Climate Action Network Canada
- Climate Proof Canada
- Equiterre

- Lung Association
- Nature Canada
- PaRx: A Prescription for Nature
- [Prevent Cancer Now](#)
- Sustainability Network
- [Women's Healthy Environments Network](#)

Social Media and Newsletters:

Social Media

All of CAPE's social media channels were utilized to raise awareness, mobilize action and report on activities of the Toxics Program files.

[Facebook](#): 4.7K likes, 5.1K followers

[Instagram](#): 2,930 followers

[LinkedIn](#): 548 followers

[Twitter](#): 7,162 Followers

[YouTube](#): 51 subscribers

TikTok: 54 followers

Newsletter

CAPE prepares and sends out a quarterly newsletter and it is a major driver for signatures on actions, awareness raising of our campaigns and activities, and increasing engagement and mobilization of our community of physicians and nurses. The newsletter is distributed in English and French, segmented based on preference.

English: 13217 subscribers; French: 602 subscribers

Funding and Donations:

Given the work being done to bring Bill S-5 over the finish line, May was an active month for the Toxics program in our emails, donations, and new supporters.

- Toxics newsletter sign-ups in 2023: 137 in English and 4 in French
- CAPE gained 213 new supporters in May
- Donations to CAPE via email blasts - \$888:
 - May 8 - Bill S5 vote: \$188
 - May 9 - Bill S5 follow-up: \$407
 - May 30 - House passage of Bill S5: \$293