

MEMORANDUM

Date: 11 September 2002

To: Ontario Medical Officers of Health

From: Michael Perley
Director

Subject: Region of York's rejection of ventilation pilot project

In April of this year, Ontario Restaurant, Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA) President Terry Mundell appeared before the City of Toronto's Economic Development Committee to ask for renewed consideration of ventilation technology as a compliance option in the City's smoking by-law. His request was rejected.

The following month, Mundell and Canadian Restaurant and Food Services Association (CRFA) President Doug Needham appeared before the Region of York's Health and Emergency Medical Services Committee to request that the Region endorse and participate in a ventilation demonstration project. The Committee passed a resolution, subsequently endorsed by York Regional Council, that consideration be given to participation and that Regional staff prepare a report describing the conditions under which Regional participation might occur.

On September 5th, the Committee received the staff report, which recommended that the Region not participate in the project. The Committee approved the staff recommendation by a unanimous vote. Councillors who spoke in support of rejection, including Regional Chair Bill Fisch, made it clear that they were not only rejecting the proposal before them, but that they did not wish any further representations made to them about ventilation demonstration projects.

I am enclosing a copy of the staff report for your information. Also attached is a letter I wrote to Committee Chair Councillor Joyce Frustaglio containing OCAT's recommendation that the ORHMA/CRFA proposal be rejected, together with accompanying documentation about the links between the associations and the Canadian tobacco industry. The statement I made to the Committee on September 5th is also enclosed for your background.

We have reason to believe that the associations will continue their promotion of this pilot project, and will try to find a municipality which is willing to sponsor it. Leading candidate municipalities likely include Durham Region and Simcoe County.

ACTION REQUESTED: Please circulate this report to appropriate staff and municipal officials in your health unit area, together with a request not to consider endorsing or sponsoring any type of ventilation demonstration project proposed by the ORHMA/CRFA. Municipal clerks should be requested to notify you, should any request for deputations from either of these organizations and their representatives be received.

Should you wish to refer to an additional critique of the reasons for the inadequacy of ventilation as a compliance option for smoke-free by-laws, please refer to the May 2001 Ontario Tobacco Research Unit report on best practices of environmental tobacco control (www.camh.net/otru/ETSreportMay2001.pdf), which contains a detailed chapter on this issue.

Many thanks for your assistance.