

The way we were



Industrial roots

Here is an aerial shot of the Beardmore Tannery in 1919 showing why the celebrations in Acton are named the Leathertown Festival.

Photo courtesy of the Esquesing Historical Society; text provided by Heritage Halton Hills

From our readers

HOT STUFF

Zlatko Milenkovic is very proud of his cayenne peppers, which grew to be more than a foot long, saying "Everybody says they've never seen such long peppers." Neighbour Rita Bairstow calls them Foot-long Green Hots. Photo by Rita Bairstow



Got a photo you want to share?
Email: cgamble@theifp.ca

On the road to clean air

Air quality is critical to our health. Research from the Ontario Medical Association concludes that over 9,500 Ontarians die prematurely each year due to smog. During the hot humid days between April and September, air pollution becomes increasingly dangerous to humans, penetrating the lungs and even the blood stream. Although we may not see it or smell it, the build up of air pollution affects even the rural residents of Wellington County and Halton Hills during the hot summer months.

In an effort to protect Canadians against the health effects of pollution, the government of Canada introduced mandatory reductions in emissions to combat pollution and greenhouse gases in our atmosphere. As a result of these mandatory reductions, annual emissions of greenhouse gases and pollution have dropped by five per cent, from 737Mt in 2005 to 699Mt in 2012 (the most recent year for which data is available).

This drop in emissions is due to a number of actions the federal government has taken. In 2010, the government announced new fuel efficiency standards for passenger cars and light trucks.

As a result, the average fuel efficiency of cars and light trucks sold in Canada will increase 25 per cent by 2016 and 50 per cent by 2025, compared to 2008 levels.

In 2011, new fuel efficiency standards for heavy trucks were announced.

Beginning this year, "big-rig" trucks sold in Canada will see a 23 per cent reduction in emissions by 2018.

The transportation sector accounts for a quarter of all annual emissions and is the largest source of emissions

in Canada, so these fuel efficiency gains are having a real impact on reducing pollution and greenhouse gases. These gains are especially noticeable in shopping for a new car. The average vehicle sold today is much more fuel-efficient than vehicles sold as recently as five years ago.

In 2012, the government introduced tough regulations to reduce emissions in Canada's coal sector, becoming one of the first major economies to ban the construction of traditional coal-fired electricity generation plants.

Even though the Canadian economy grew about 32 per cent between 2005 and 2012, annual emissions have dropped five per cent for the same period.

More impressively, and contrary to popular perception, per capita emissions in the last several years are at their lowest levels since tracking began in 1990.

However, more needs to be done, especially in the area of scientific research and development. That is why, on June 4, 2014, the federal government announced \$1.4 million for seven universities across Canada, including the universities of Toronto and Waterloo, to undertake research in combating greenhouse gases and pollution.

Through the federal government's continued action, scientists and policy makers are working together to achieve Canada's economy-wide 2020 target of a 17 per cent reduction in emissions from 2005 levels.

This will result in reduced pollution and fewer smog days during the hot, humid days of a southern Ontario summer. That's good news for all of us.

—Michael Chong is the MP for Wellington-Halton Hills



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