

Esteemed Members of Oshawa City Council
50 Centre St. S.
Oshawa, ON
L1H 3Z7

Laura Barton
[REDACTED]-28 Albert St.
Oshawa, ON
L1H 8S5

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Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak today. I am here to address a critical and urgent issue that impacts the health and well-being of our community: the need for a maximum heat bylaw for residential apartments.

As we all know, the climate is changing, and with it, the frequency and severity of heatwaves are increasing. This poses a significant risk, particularly to those living in multi-unit buildings where inadequate cooling can lead to dangerously high indoor temperatures. On May 21st of this year (2024) it reached 32C in my apartment, please see *Photos A and B*.

Overheated apartments are not just uncomfortable—they can be life-threatening. Prolonged exposure to high temperatures can cause heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and other serious health complications. Vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, children, and individuals with preexisting health conditions, are especially at risk. This risk worsens when there is no break from the heat overnight, please see *Photos C, D, & E*.

Currently, our city has regulations in place to ensure minimum heating standards. However, we lack comprehensive guidelines to protect residents from excessive indoor heat during the summer. This gap leaves many tenants at the mercy of the rising temperatures, with little recourse to ensure their homes remain safe and habitable.

I propose the implementation of a maximum heat bylaw that would:

1. **Set a Maximum Indoor Temperature:** Establish a maximum allowable indoor temperature, beyond which landlords must take action to cool the apartments. This could be set at a reasonable threshold, such as 80 degrees Fahrenheit (27 degrees Celsius), in line with health guidelines.
2. **Mandate Cooling Measures:** Require landlords to provide adequate cooling solutions, such as air conditioning units or cooling centers within the building, especially during heatwaves.
3. **Ensure Regular Inspections and Enforcement:** Implement a clear process for tenants to report violations, ensuring compliance with the bylaw.
4. **Provide Support for Compliance:** Offer incentives to landlords to upgrade their buildings' cooling infrastructure, ensuring that the burden of compliance does not disproportionately impact renters.

The adoption of a maximum heat standard bylaw is not just a matter of comfort—it is a public health necessity. Other cities facing similar challenges have successfully implemented such regulations, and there is ample evidence to suggest that doing so significantly reduces heat-related illnesses and fatalities.

By enacting a maximum heat bylaw, we demonstrate our commitment to the health, safety, and dignity of all residents. Let us take this proactive step to protect our community from the dangers of excessive heat and ensure that everyone has a safe place to call home, regardless of the weather outside.

Thank you for your attention to this crucial issue. I urge the City Council to act swiftly and decisively in passing this bylaw for the benefit of all our citizens.

Sincerely,

Laura Barton