



## PRESS RELEASE

# Calling on the B.C. Government to Ensure Heat Safety for Renters

**September 22, 2025 - Vancouver, BC, on Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Territories**

Ecotrust Canada, along with twelve other organizations and elected officials from eight local governments, call on the B.C. Government to make protecting tenants from extreme heat a priority.

As we saw during B.C.'s 2021 heat dome, the deadliest weather incident in Canadian history, extreme heat can push healthcare systems **to the brink**. Extreme heat precipitates not only immediate medical emergencies, but heat-related injuries that can persist for years. These devastating impacts can be mitigated by ensuring people are able to keep cool in their homes, but currently, renters face barriers, restrictions and bans on installing life-saving cooling systems. Local governments have repeatedly asked for province-wide action on this issue, including through Union of BC Municipalities resolutions.

We ask the B.C. Government to ensure that tenants have the right to cooling in their homes, and that building owners and stratas cannot unreasonably restrict them from doing so. Renters must have the right to use reasonable means to keep their homes safe and livable, whether through heat pumps, air conditioners, external shading, or other active and passive cooling, ventilation, and air quality measures.

Dylan Heerema, Senior Policy Advisor, Ecotrust Canada: *"Everyone in British Columbia has the right to a healthy, comfortable, and safe place to live. The Province needs to do more to protect renters from unsafe housing conditions, including the deadly risk of extreme heat. We are asking the B.C. Government to ensure that tenants have the right to cool their homes to protect their own health. Unreasonable cooling bans are a violation of a landlord's obligation to provide safe housing."*

Rowan Burdge, Provincial Director, BC Poverty Reduction Coalition: *"With rising temperatures and longer heatwaves, tenants in British Columbia deserve stronger cooling protections to ensure their homes remain safe and livable. No one should have to choose between affordability and their health during extreme heat. It's time to create a standard where every tenant has access to the cooling they need, regardless of income or housing type. For people who are lower income or in precarious housing situations, more supports and protections are needed to keep people cool and safe, especially for those experiencing poverty. B.C. needs to do more to ensure tenants are safe in their homes."*

Yasmin Abraham, President and Co-Founder, Kambo Energy Group: *"At Kambo, through our Empower Me program, we've been helping underserved communities in the Greater Vancouver Area for over 15 years make informed energy decisions for their homes. We see tenants every day struggling to stay safe during extreme heat, yet they are often left without the same protections as homeowners. The right to cooling is about more than comfort — it's about closing an equity gap that leaves renters disproportionately exposed to life-threatening heat."*

Dr. Bethany Ricker, Co-Chair of the Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment - British Columbia (CAPE BC): *"As health care professionals, we see renters suffer life-threatening effects of extreme heat when they're unable to keep their homes cool — a crisis that is only worsening with climate change. I worry especially about vulnerable community members with the least capacity to adapt and protect themselves: people with pre-existing medical and mental health conditions, those living alone and socially isolated, those facing financial barriers or precarious housing, our youngest and our oldest community members. This summer, I visited an elderly man in his*



*sweltering apartment, who had become dehydrated and fallen, hitting his head. I cared for pregnant patients with dizziness, extreme swelling, and more severe complications of high blood pressure and preterm birth. All of my colleagues have seen their most vulnerable patients in similarly dangerous situations. Alongside immediate measures like removing barriers to using cooling devices, we must move toward stronger protections that guarantee safe indoor temperatures in rental housing. This is essential to ensure people have safe and healthy homes and to protect renters' lives during extreme heat."*

### **About Ecotrust Canada**

Ecotrust Canada is an enterprising charity that works with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities toward building an economy that provides for life. Over the past eight years, our Community Energy team has been facilitating projects on the ground, building relationships with communities, and researching best practices in policy and program design. [ecotrust.ca](http://ecotrust.ca)

### **For more information:**

**Dylan Heerema** – Senior Policy Advisor, Ecotrust Canada | C: 604-223-9499 | [dylan@ecotrust.ca](mailto:dylan@ecotrust.ca)

**Jessica McIlroy** – Councillor, City of North Vancouver | C: 604-992-6462 | [mcllroy@cnv.org](mailto:mcllroy@cnv.org)

**Yasmin Abraham** – President, Kambo Energy Group | C: 778-899-5939 | [yasmin@kambo.com](mailto:yasmin@kambo.com)

**Amanda Burrows** – Executive Director, First United | C: 604-616-4940 | [aburrows@firstunited.ca](mailto:aburrows@firstunited.ca)

**Dr. Bethany Ricker** – Co-Chair, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment | 905-730-4377 | [bethany.rose.22@gmail.com](mailto:bethany.rose.22@gmail.com)

### **Signatories:**

Chuck Rumsey, Executive Director, Ecotrust Canada

Patrick Johnstone, Mayor, City of New Westminster

Nadine Nakagawa, Councillor, City of New Westminster

Jessica McIlroy, Councillor, City of North Vancouver

Pete Fry, Councillor, City of Vancouver

Sean Orr, Councillor, City of Vancouver

Lucy Maloney, Councillor, City of Vancouver

Samantha Agtarap, Councillor, City of Port Moody

Amy Lubik, City Councillor, City of Port Moody

Lauren Greenlaw, Councillor, District of Squamish

Isaac Gilbert, Councillor, City of Penticton

Alison Evans, Councillor, City of Pitt Meadows

Dale Bass, Councillor, City of Kamloops

Margaret Pfoh, CEO, Aboriginal Housing Management Association



Monica Bhandari, Chair, BC ACORN

Chris Severson-Baker, Executive Director, Pembina Institute

Yasmin Abraham, President, Kambo Energy Group

Rowan Burdge, Executive Director, BC Poverty Reduction Coalition

Dr. Bethany Ricker, Co-Chair, Canadian Association of Physicians for the Environment - BC

Amanda Burrows, Executive Director, First United

Sunil Singal, Climate Campaigner, Stand.earth

Sherry Yano, Director of Engagement, David Suzuki Foundation

Mohammed Rafi Arefin, Assistant Professor, UBC Centre for Climate Justice

Alexandra Woodsworth, Director of Organizing, Dogwood BC

Glen Hoos, Director of Communications + Sustainability, Down Syndrome Resource Foundation