

# Clean Air

Every British Columbian can breathe clean, healthy air—both indoors and out—all year round

## HOW WE'RE THINKING ABOUT THIS

The Province has a responsibility to protect public health by taking air pollution seriously and addressing the rising dangers posed by wildfire smoke.

When elected, we will take decisive action to safeguard the health of our communities, with a focus on caring for the most vulnerable. Wildfire smoke is not just a short-term nuisance—its long-term effects on health are becoming increasingly apparent. To confront this challenge, we need long-term planning and meaningful investments in clean air infrastructure across the province.

## PROBLEM DEFINITION

Wildfire smoke has become an unavoidable and troublesome reality of BC summers, with communities across the province regularly facing smoky skies and air quality alerts. Climate change, coupled with historically poor forestry practices, has created conditions for larger and more intense wildfires. These fires produce smoke that can travel thousands of kilometers, impacting both nearby and distant communities alike.

Air pollution is now the greatest environmental threat to human health, and wildfire smoke plays a significant role. In Canada, it is linked to thousands of premature deaths each year, and in BC air pollution costs the healthcare system at least \$14 billion annually.

There is no safe level of exposure to wildfire smoke. Even at low concentrations, it poses serious health risks. As climate change continues to accelerate, our exposure to this harmful pollution will only intensify, making it clear that urgent action is needed to protect public health.

## PROBLEM DEFINITION

### Invest in Clean Air Centres and HEPA filters.

- Monitor and regulate air quality in both indoor and outdoor environments, particularly in places frequented by vulnerable groups such as children, pregnant people, those with pre-existing health conditions, and the elderly.
- Invest in clean air centres in every community to provide safe environments during air quality emergencies, ensuring they have appropriate and safe levels of air filtration and air conditioning. Ensure clean air centres are equipped to meet the needs of the community, providing water, food, beds, access to Wi-Fi and other essential services.
- Make clean air accessible to people in their homes by providing funding to purchase portable air cleaners with HEPA filters.
- Mandate that existing infrastructure for vulnerable populations- including, assisted care facilities, childcare centres, and schools - are retrofitted with air filters.
- Require new buildings to have safe levels of air filtration and cooling and standardize this across the province.
- Ensure employers and operators adhere to regulations in order to ensure safe air quality standards are met.