

This resolution was NOT ADOPTED at national level. No action can be directed to the federal level. This resolution has a provincial component that can be acted on as a private citizen; you may state you are a CWL member but you cannot state you are writing on behalf of a CWL council, nor can you write to government using League letterhead.

Education and Health

Keewatin-The Pas/Our Lady of the Sacred Heart – The Pas

Resolution 2017.01 Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and Environmental Sensitivities

- Whereas,** Worldwide every year 4.3 million deaths occur from exposure to indoor air pollution and 3.7 million deaths are attributable to outdoor air pollution; and
- Whereas,** Approximately 3% of Canadians have been diagnosed with environmental sensitivities; and
- Whereas,** Housing may be the most crucial element in survival for people with multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS); therefore, be it
- Resolved,** That Manitoba Provincial Council, through the national council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada urge the federal government:
- (a) to develop health policy raising awareness of the issues faced by people suffering from MCS and environmental sensitivities; and
 - (b) to encourage medical associations to develop policy, raise awareness and educate members/doctors of issues concerning MCS and environmental sensitivities; and be it
- Resolved,** That Manitoba Provincial Council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, urge the Manitoba provincial government to build dwelling units that could be rented out, subsidized, and/or rent-to-own to the people suffering from MCS and environmental sensitivities; and be it
- Resolved,** That Manitoba Provincial Council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada, urge the Manitoba provincial government:
- (a) to develop health policy to raise awareness of the issues faced by people suffering from MCS and environmental sensitivities; and
 - (b) to encourage medical associations to develop policy, raise awareness and educate members/doctors of issues concerning MCS and environmental sensitivities; and be it
- Resolved,** That this resolution be forwarded through the national executive to the other ten provincial councils, encouraging them to become aware of this issue as it pertains to their province/territory, and to act on it, as deemed necessary/prudent; and be it further
- Resolved,** That this resolution be forwarded to the national council of The Catholic Women’s League of Canada for consideration at the 2017 annual convention.

BRIEF Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and Environmental Sensitivities

According to the May 25, 2015 World Health Organization Assembly, “... air pollution is the world’s largest single environmental health risk. Every year 4.3 million deaths occur from exposure to indoor air pollution and 3.7 million deaths are attributable to outdoor air pollution.” (WHO) The resolution

arising from that assembly "...highlights the key role national health authorities need to play in raising awareness about the potential to save lives and reduce health costs, if air pollution is addressed effectively." (ibid)

"The term "environmental sensitivities" describes a variety of reactions to chemicals, electromagnetic radiation and other environmental factors at exposure levels commonly tolerated by many people." (Sears) "Approximately 3% of Canadians have been diagnosed with environmental sensitivities. They usually experience neurological impairments, and often experience other symptoms including runny eyes and nose, headaches, fatigue, pain and breathing and digestive problems. Environmental sensitivities may develop gradually after chronic exposure to relatively low levels of chemicals as seen in "sick buildings," or suddenly after a major exposure to an environmental disaster or a chemical spill. This condition may be initiated by one or a combination of environmental factors such as mould, pesticides, solvents, chemicals off-gassing from carpets or furnishings, or electromagnetic phenomena." (ibid)

"In multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) a person develops markedly negative reactions to everyday chemical exposures. These include exposures to pesticides in buildings, in gardens, on our food, and on pets; chemical cleaners; petrochemical heating systems; paints; perfumes; industrial emissions; and a myriad of others." (Gibson) "MCS symptoms can affect any organ system including respiratory, digestive, neurological, endocrine, urinary, cardiovascular, or immune." (ibid) "Once a person has developed environmental sensitivities, reactions may occur to a broader range of factors, at levels of exposure that were previously tolerated and that cause little difficulty to many others." (Sears) "Early recognition, environmental control, avoidance of symptom-triggering agents, removal of residual toxins from the body, and recovery of normal biological processes are key to regaining and maintaining health for people with sensitivities. However, susceptibility to sensitivities will be life long." (ibid)

"Several medical organizations have not recognized multiple chemical sensitivities. However, medical opinion is divided, and further research is needed." (CCOHS)

"Housing may be the single most crucial element in survival and possible improvement for someone with MCS. Yet it is almost impossible for people with MCS to find places to live that are truly safe for them. Housing may be their most difficult challenge, a challenge greater even than for people with other disabilities." (Gibson) "Canadian statutes do not prescribe building standards that are protective for people with environmental sensitivities." (Sears) "The person with MCS needs a home free of ALL petrochemical heat and cooking sources, pesticides, conventional cleaners, solvent-containing paints, formaldehyde-emitting furniture (foam and pressed board), perfumes and air fresheners, tobacco smoke, and other volatile chemicals. Some need the home to be free of animal allergens as well." (Gibson)

"Our cultural response to MCS has been almost entirely negative. People with this primarily invisible disability have been ignored, de-legitimized, dropped as friends, discriminated against in the workplace, fired from their jobs, and excluded from housing and medical care." (Gibson) This resolution urges the federal and the Manitoba provincial government to develop health policy raising awareness of the issues faced by people suffering from multiple chemical sensitivity(MCS) and environmental sensitivities; and encourage medical associations to develop policy, raise awareness and educate members/doctors of issues concerning MCS and environmental sensitivities. The Manitoba provincial government is also urged to build dwelling units that could be rented out, subsidized, and/or rent-to-own to the people suffering from multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and environmental sensitivities.

WORKS CITED Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and Environmental Sensitivities

1. Gibson, Pamela Reed. "Understanding & Accommodating People with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity in Independent Living." (2002): n. pag. Ilru@ilru.org, 2002. Web. 23 May 2017.

<http://www.ilru.org/sites/default/files/MCS%20FINAL.PDF><http://www.ilru.org/sites/default/files/MCS%20FINAL.PDF>.

2. Government of Canada, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety. "Indoor Air Quality - General: OSH Answers." *Government of Canada, Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety*. N.p., 04 July 2016. Web. 15 May 2017.
http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/chemicals/iaq_intro.html.
3. Sears, Margaret E. "The Medical Perspective on Environmental Sensitivities ." *Canadian Human Rights Commission*. Canadian Human Rights Commission, May 2007. Web. 23 May 2017.
http://www.chrc-ccdp.gc.ca/sites/default/files/envsensensitivity_en.pdf.
4. "World Health Assembly Closes, Passing Resolutions on Air Pollution and Epilepsy." *World Health Organization*. World Health Organization, 26 May 2015. Web. 16 May 2017.
<http://www.who.int/en/>.

ACTION PLAN Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS) and Environmental Sensitivities

1. Write letters to the prime minister and the minister of health with copies to your local member of parliament urging the federal government to develop health policy raising awareness of the issues faced by people suffering from multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and environmental sensitivities; and encourage medical associations to develop policy, raise awareness and educate members/doctors of issues concerning MCS and environmental sensitivities.
2. Write letters to the premier of Manitoba and the minister responsible for housing with copies to your local MLA urging the Manitoba provincial government to build dwelling units that could be rented out, subsidized, and/or rent-to-own to the people suffering from multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and environmental sensitivities.
3. Write letters to the premier of Manitoba and the minister of health, seniors and active living with copies to your local MLA urging the provincial government to: to develop health policy raising awareness of the issues faced by people suffering from multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and environmental sensitivities; and to encourage medical associations to develop policy, raise awareness and educate members/doctors of issues concerning MCS and environmental sensitivities.
4. Hold a speaker presentation on multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS) and environmental sensitivities.
5. Monitor the federal and provincial government's response to the request contained in the resolution.