



Association pour la santé environnementale du Québec  
Environmental Health Association of Québec

## ECO-JOURNAL

April 2024

### News from ASEQ-EHAQ

Dear members and friends,

We hope you are doing well, as well as can be. As April begins, we'd like to take a moment to reflect on an important event that took place on March 25, 2024 - our Annual General Meeting (AGM). Before we delve into upcoming needs and events, let's recap the highlights of our recent gathering.

Our 20<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting (AGM) was preceded by a Round Table event. Present at this event were several important groups represented by the leaders of their organization. Present were, Philip Rizcallah – Chief Executive Officer, Accessibility Standards Canada; Robert Lattanzio, LLB BCL – Executive Director, ARCH Disability Law Centre ; Heather Walkus – National Chair, Council of Canadians with Disabilities (CCD) ; Bill Adair – Executive Director, Spinal Cord Injury Canada ; André Prévost – Strategic Advisor and Coordination, la Confédération des organismes de personnes handicapées du Québec (COPHAN) ; Melanie Langille – President and CEO, NB Lung ; John Molot, MD – Medical Advisor, Environmental Health Associations of Québec and Canada ; Caroline Barakat, PhD – Associate Professor – Faculty of Health Sciences, Ontario Tech University; Michel Gaudet , Executive Director, and Rohini Peris, President and CEO, representing the Environmental Health Associations of Canada and Québec.

The speakers represented a diverse array of disciplines, including Accessibility Standards Canada, Indigenous participation, disability advocacy, law, environmental science, medical research, and community leadership.



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In case you missed this event, we will be releasing a video in the coming weeks. Besides a vigorous conversation on the path forward for Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS), we were pleased to hear the message from Mr. Rizcallah, who opened the Round Table. Here is a summary of his talk: Philip Rizcallah, CEO of Accessibility Standards Canada (ASC), outlined the organization's objectives and role. Established in 2019 under the Accessible Canada Act, Accessibility Standards Canada focuses on creating standards to eliminate accessibility barriers for federally regulated entities and organizations. He highlighted ASC's mandate of developing standards, funding disability-focused research, and collaborating with stakeholders to disseminate information. He emphasized an inclusive approach, with significant involvement of persons with disabilities in the development process. The organization prioritizes equity-based standards, aiming to ensure inclusivity for all Canadians, **including those with MCS**. Mr. Rizcallah stressed collaboration with provincial governments and the importance of implementing developed standards into legislation. Following his presentation, Mr. Rizcallah participated in a roundtable discussion on MCS, engaging with various speakers and experts in the disabilities field.

ASC shared a screenshot of the event and sent it out on their social media. You will have seen it on the front page of the newsletter. If you haven't already, please follow us on social media, for both groups. The Canada group has a national and international outreach, and for the Québec group, we have reached 20 years of service. All of us with MCS need to join together to become a force of strength to be recognized and accommodated across Canada.

Our activities in April will include a legal event in Saskatchewan on April 25. You can visit our website to view the [legal events](#), and [view the agenda](#) for Saskatchewan. [Preregistration](#) for this event is necessary.

We will be announcing other events as we go into April.



There is exciting news to share with you: We are creating a powerful video showcasing the experiences of individuals living with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity.

This video will be presented to the general public and to government policymakers, paving the way for much-needed changes for equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

Your participation could make a significant impact for yourself and countless others who share similar struggles.

By sharing your story in a brief on-camera interview (just 15-20 minutes of your time, and we'll use shorter parts of your interview for the final video), you can help shed light on the challenges you face daily, or your successes when accommodation is provided ... and advocate for better accommodations and awareness for MCS.

Let's work together to make a difference!

If you're interested in participating or have any questions, please reach out to us at : [office@aseq-ehaq.ca](mailto:office@aseq-ehaq.ca) – please enter 'video participation' in the subject line.

As always, we send you our very best and wish you good health and a wonderful month of April.

Warm wishes,

Rohini Peris, President & CEO

Michel Gaudet, Executive Director