



EHAC • ASEC

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



ASEQ – EHAQ

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

A Guide for People Living with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity (MCS)

Submission to the NATIONAL HOUSING COUNCIL REVIEW PANEL ON ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

Submission Deadline: June 22, 2026

Survey Link:

<https://form.simplesurvey.com/f/s.aspx?co=NxusCNit>

This is an opportunity to tell the National Housing Council about the housing barriers you face and the changes that are needed.

You do not need:

- legal expertise
- policy knowledge
- professional writing skills

Your lived experience matters.



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BEFORE YOU START

Keep your answers:

✓ Clear

✓ Short

✓ Direct

Use:

- bullet points
- short examples
- simple language

You do not need to write long paragraphs.

You can:

- save your work
- return later
- complete the survey over several days

If possible, start early and do not wait until the last day.

WHAT TYPES OF ISSUES CAN YOU DISCUSS?

You may wish to discuss:

Housing Conditions

- fragrances
- chemical exposures
- smoke drift
- pesticides
- mould
- renovations
- cleaning products



- building materials
- shared ventilation

Housing Accessibility

- lack of accommodation
- inaccessible shelters
- lack of safe temporary housing
- fear of retaliation
- difficulty obtaining accommodation

Housing Security

- forced moves
- housing instability
- homelessness
- couch surfing
- remaining in unsafe housing because there are no alternatives
- remaining in housing that is affecting your health because there are no safe alternatives

USE CONCRETE EXAMPLES

Instead of:

"Housing is difficult."

Try:

- Renovations in my building made me too ill to remain in my apartment.
- Shared ventilation exposes me to fragranced products from neighbouring units.
- I cannot safely access emergency shelters because of chemical exposures.

Helpful questions:

- What happened?
- What exposure occurred?
- How did it affect my health, housing, finances, safety, or quality of life?

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU REMEMBER YOUR EXPERIENCES

Have you ever:



- Left housing because of chemical exposures?
- Been unable to rent housing because of MCS?
- Been denied accommodation?
- Experienced retaliation after requesting accommodation?
- Been unable to access emergency shelter?
- Stayed in housing that was making you ill because there were no alternatives?
- Had difficulty finding healthcare, home care, assisted living, or long-term care because of chemical exposures?
- Delayed medical care because of housing conditions?
- Become socially isolated because of housing barriers?

What was the impact?

- Health
- Employment
- Finances
- Family relationships
- Education
- Community participation
- Quality of life

What changes would help?

THINK ABOUT SYSTEMIC BARRIERS

The Review Panel is looking for larger issues that affect many people.

Examples may include:

- lack of low-emission housing
- lack of affordable healthy housing
- lack of fragrance-free policies
- inaccessible shelters
- unsafe renovations
- lack of enforcement
- lack of accessible temporary housing
- lack of awareness about MCS

Think about:

- What happened?
- Why did it happen?
- What could be changed?



COMMUNITY RECOMMENDATIONS

A workshop held on May 25 for people with MCS, and participants identified the following priorities.

1. Affordable and Healthy Housing

Housing should be both affordable and healthy.

Many people living with MCS:

- cannot tolerate conventional housing
- require low-emission environments
- face higher housing costs
- experience poverty, unemployment, or underemployment

People should not have to choose between protecting their health and maintaining a roof over their heads.

2. Emergency Safe Housing

Participants highlighted the need for safe temporary housing when homes become inaccessible because of:

- renovations
- pesticide applications
- smoke damage
- chemical spills
- new flooring, paints, or building materials
- People need somewhere safe to go when they must leave an unsafe living situation or when their homes become temporarily inaccessible.

3. Financial Supports and Housing

Participants discussed barriers accessing:

- the Disability Tax Credit (DTC)
- disability benefits
- other disability supports

Financial supports can play an important role in helping people obtain and maintain safe housing.



4. Education and Awareness

More awareness of MCS is needed among:

- landlords
- housing providers
- property managers
- contractors
- tradespeople
- maintenance staff
- government agencies

Accessibility begins with understanding.

5. Aging and Long-Term Care

By 2020, more than 1.13 million Canadians reported a diagnosis of MCS.

Approximately half were over age 55.

Recent 2025 Canadian Community Health Survey data suggest that more than 3.1 million Canadians are reporting MCS.

This represents approximately one in ten Canadians.

Participants emphasized the need for:

- accessible seniors' housing
- assisted living
- supportive housing
- long-term care

6. Innovative Housing Models

Participants recommended exploring:

- low-emission housing communities
- healthy indoor environments
- housing that supports recovery, participation, and independence

Example:

[Ecoasis Québec](#)



Pilot projects could help develop models that may eventually be replicated across Canada.

7. Transparent Product Labelling

Participants emphasized the importance of:

- full ingredient disclosure
- clear identification of chemicals in products
- better information for consumers, builders, landlords, and housing providers

People cannot avoid harmful exposures if they do not know what chemicals are contained in the products being used around them.

YOU CAN ALSO RECOMMEND SOLUTIONS

Examples include:

- fragrance-free housing policies
- low-emission housing standards
- affordable healthy housing
- safer shelters
- emergency safe housing
- better accommodation systems
- stronger enforcement
- public education
- accessible long-term care
- transparent product labelling

You do not need to be an expert to recommend solutions.

NEED HELP?

If you need assistance:

- understanding questions
- organizing your thoughts
- preparing responses
- completing the survey

Contact:



contact@aseq-ehaq.ca

You do not have to do this alone.

FINAL MESSAGE

Throughout MCS Awareness Month, we have worked together to raise awareness, build understanding, and advocate for greater recognition, accessibility, and inclusion.

But awareness alone is not enough.

This consultation gives us an opportunity to turn awareness into action.

Every submission helps build the evidence needed to demonstrate that accessible housing must include accessible indoor environments.

Thank you for helping advance accessible, healthy, and inclusive housing for people living with Multiple Chemical Sensitivity