

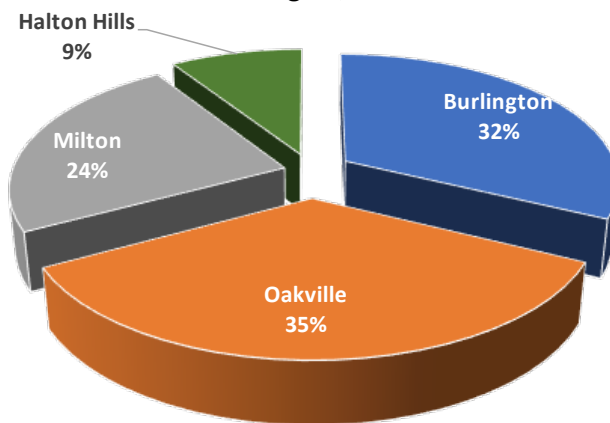
Unsuitable Housing

What is unsuitable housing? As discussed in Community Lens #135, it is one of the housing standards used to determine core housing need in a community. A household is said to be in core housing need if it falls below at least one of the housing standards of adequacy, affordability or suitability and the household is spending 30% or more of total income on housing costs.

This Community Lens takes a closer look at the suitability standard. According to the National Occupational Standard (NOS) requirement, there is one bedroom for each cohabiting adult couple; lone parent; unattached household member age 18 or older; and same-sex pair of children under age 18. Children of opposite sex under 5 years are expected to share a bedroom. Households not meeting this standard are considered unsuitable and overcrowding¹. The strong link between social determinants of health and poor housing conditions including overcrowding has been well established and documented.

In 2016, there were 17,500 Halton households in core housing need. This represents almost one in ten (9.4%) households². Among these households, over 6,400 units fall below the suitability standard. Over two-thirds of the unsuitable households are in Oakville and Burlington. The regional average of unsuitable housing stands at 3.3%.

**Proportion of Households Living in Unsuitable Housing
Halton Region, 2016**



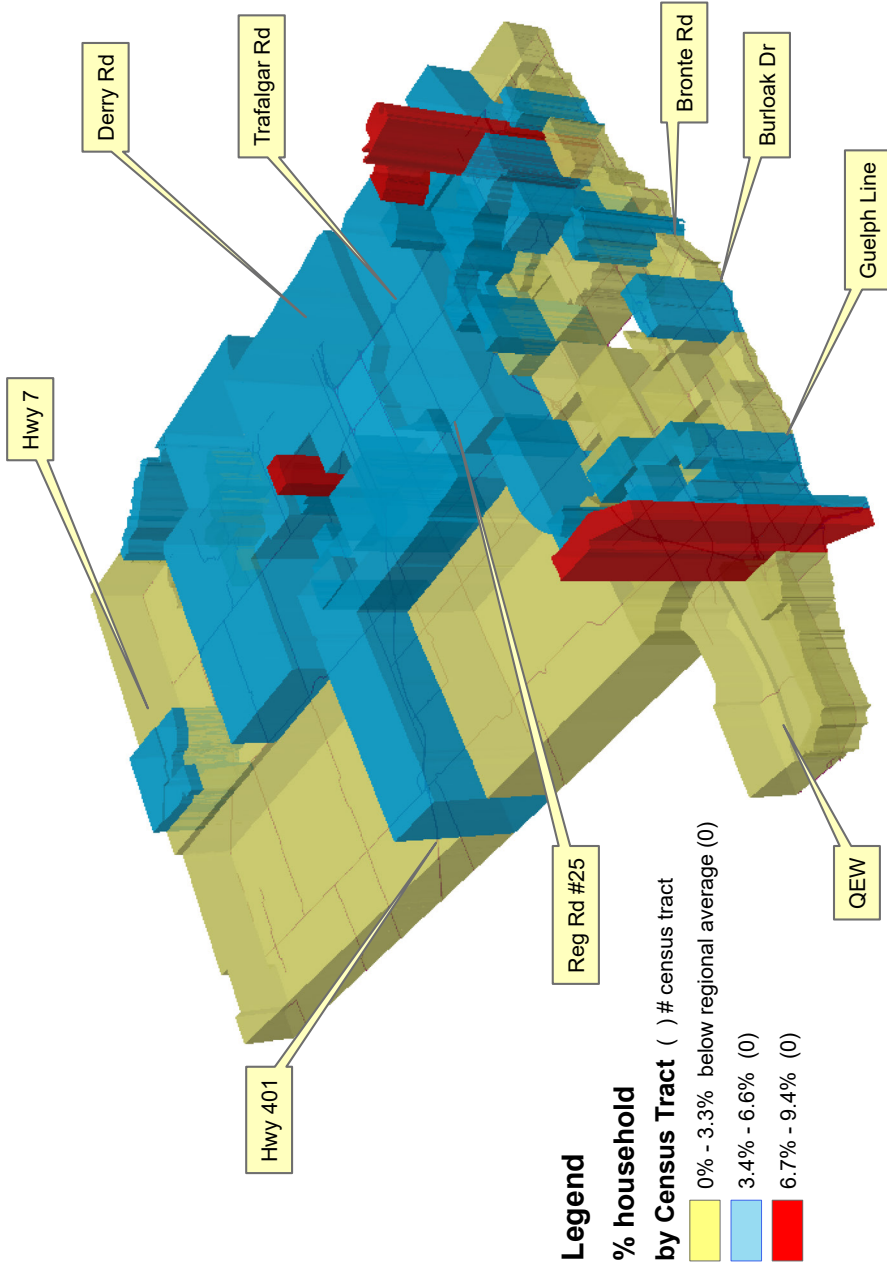
Community Development Halton/Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census

As displayed on the following map, there are 45 neighbourhoods/census tracts with above regional average households living in unsuitable housing. The percentages in four neighbourhoods (coloured in red) are double the regional average. Two of the neighbourhoods are in Oakville, one in Burlington and one in Milton. The neighbourhood in Burlington records the highest percentage. Almost one in ten (9.4%) households in that neighbourhood are living in unsuitable/overcrowded housing.

¹ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), *Measuring Overcrowding – USA and Canada*, June 1, 2016

² Non-family households with at least one maintainer aged 15 to 29 attending school are considered not to be in “core housing need” regardless of their housing circumstances. Attending school is considered a transitional phase, and low incomes earned by student households are viewed as being a temporary condition

Proportion of Households Living in Unsuitable Housing by Census Tract, Halton Region, 2016



Community Development Halton/Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census



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Community Development Halton
 3350 South Service Road
 Burlington, ON L7N 3M6
 905-632-1975

www.cdhalton.ca