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**Student Occupation demanding Victoria University divest**

**from fossil fuels reaches ninth day**

**TORONTO, ONTARIO, Victoria College, Univesity of Toronto -** More than 200 students have participated in the ongoing occupation of Victoria College at the University of Toronto ahead of a vote by the Victoria College Board of Regents on fossil fuel divestment. Today [marks the eighteenth](https://thevarsity.ca/2023/04/02/student-occupation-demanding-victoria-university-divest-from-fossil-fuels-reaches-seventh-day/) day since the occupation began, and those involved show little signs of letting up any time soon. In October 2021, [U of T announced its divestment timeline](https://www.utoronto.ca/news/u-t-divest-fossil-fuel-investments-create-climate-positive-campus), joining the [1,485 institutions](https://stand.earth/insights/1485-institutions-with-assets-over-39-2-trillion-have-committed-to-divest-from-fossil-fuels/) that have committed to divesting from fossil fuels. However, this commitment does not apply to Victoria College and U of T’s other [federated colleges,](https://thevarsity.ca/2021/11/13/op-ed-u-of-t-federated-colleges-divestment/) which maintain their endowments. Despite the ongoing and worsening climate crisis, Victoria College has invested over 17.5 million dollars into the fossil fuel industry and currently [owns an oil well](https://thestrand.ca/vics-spoiled-reputation/) in Weyburn, Saskatchewan.

This occupation comes after the release of a [new IPCC](https://www.ipcc.ch/report/sixth-assessment-report-cycle/) report outlining the catastrophic effects of climate change and the need to transition away from fossil fuels immediately. Since Monday, March 27, students have been occupying the building around the clock, with many sleeping on the floor and in tents, and some only leaving to shower and obtain clean clothes.

“We hope this disruption and displacement pulls the administration out of their tower and forces them to confront the realities of climate change,” said Rachel Peterson, a fourth-year Victoria College student. “The longer it takes for the Board to divest, the more blood is on their hands.”

Over seven hundred Victoria College students have [signed a petition](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfPo_w781_BQmViGYRLIp7gI4V36PmYU_CrSHC-SvKlpSd0xw/viewform) demanding that Victoria College divest from fossil fuels, a call supported by many within the broader U of T community, including the University of Toronto Student Union, who signed onto the petition, and the Victoria College Student Union which has publicly endorsed the occupation. Despite U of T’s divestment commitment and widespread student pressure, Victoria College has failed to make an official statement on divestment. It is unclear exactly when the occupation will end, with some students saying they have no plans of leaving until Victoria College joins U of T and divests from fossil fuels.

“We’re not going anywhere,” said Atlas Changulani, a first-year Victoria College student with Climate Justice U of T. “We will continue to fight until Vic commits to full, transparent, and timely divestment.”

*Please find photos of the action available* [*here*](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Y3lpSh-Wi4ihrQXxecotJXQoGEvXJzb2?usp=sharing)*. Any photos published should credit the individuals in the photo and the photographer. More photos of the occupation will be made available at the link above in the coming days.*

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