

Air pollution assignment

[Environment](#), [Air](#)



History Humans probably first experienced harm from air pollution when they built fires in poorly ventilated caves. Since then we have gone on to pollute more of the earth's surface. Until recently, environmental pollution problems have been local and minor because of the Earth's own ability to absorb and purify minor quantities of pollutants. The industrialization of society, the introduction of motorized vehicles, and the explosion of the population, are factors contributing toward the growing air pollution problem. At this time it is urgent that we find methods to clean up the air.

The primary air pollutants found in most urban areas are carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides, sulfur oxides, hydrocarbons, and particulate matter (both solid and liquid). These pollutants are dispersed throughout the world's atmosphere in concentrations high enough to gradually cause serious health problems. Serious health problems can occur quickly when air pollutants are concentrated, such as when massive injections of sulfur dioxide and suspended particulate matter are emitted by a large volcanic eruption.

Pollution in the Home

You cannot escape air pollution, not even in your own home. " In 1985 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) reported that toxic chemicals found in the air of almost every American home are three times more likely to cause some type of cancer than outdoor air pollutants". (Miller 488) The health problems in these buildings are called " sick building syndrome". " An estimated one-fifth to one-third of all U. S. Buildings are now considered " sick". (Miller 489) The EPA has found that the air in some office buildings is 100 times more polluted than the air outside.

Poor ventilation causes about 40% of the indoor air pollution problems. The rest come from specific sources such as copying machines, electrical and telephone cables, mold and microbe-harboring air conditioning systems and ducts, cleaning fluids, cigarette smoke, carpet, latex caulk and paint, vinyl molding, linoleum tile, and building materials and furniture that emit air pollutants such as formaldehyde. A major indoor air pollutant is radon-222, a colorless, odorless, tasteless, naturally occurring radioactive gas produced by the radioactive decay of uranium-238. According to studies by the EPA and the National Research Council, exposure to radon is second only to smoking as a cause of lung cancer” (Miller 489) Radon enters through pores and cracks in concrete when indoor air pressure is less than the pressure of gases in the soil. Indoor air will be healthier than outdoor air if you use an energy recovery ventilator to provide a consistent supply of fresh filtered air and then seal air leaks in the shell of your home.

Air pollution has unhealthy effects on people, animals and plant-life across the globe. Every time we inhale, we carry dangerous air pollutants into our bodies. These pollutants can cause short-term effects such as eye and throat irritation. More alarming however, are the long-term effects such as cancer and damage to the body’s immune, neurological, reproductive and respiratory systems. Acid Rain is a significant air pollution problem that affects rural, suburban and urban areas that are down-wind of major industrial areas.

Acid rain is caused when sulfur and nitrogen pollution from industrial smokestacks is combined with moisture in the atmosphere. The resulting

rain is acidic which destroys natural ecosystems and buildings. Global Warming, as pollution gathers in the Earth's atmosphere, it traps heat and causes average temperatures to rise. It is hard to predict exactly how climate change will affect a particular area. Here are a few likely results: ; A rise in sea level between 3. 5 and 34. 6 in. 9-CACM) leading to more coastal erosion, flooding during storms and permanent inundation ; Severe stress on many forests, wetlands, alpine regions, and other natural ecosystems ; Greater threats to human health as mosquitoes and other disease-carrying insects and rodents spread diseases over larger geographical regions Disruption of agriculture in some parts of the world due to increased temperature, water stress and sea-level rise in low-lying areas such as Bangladesh or the Mississippi River delta.