

What are Toxic Air Pollutants?

Toxic air pollutants, or hazardous air pollutants, are air pollutants that can cause cancer or other serious health effects. Other health effects include reproductive effects or birth defects. The EPA is working with a number of businesses including: state, local, and tribal governments; to reduce air toxins.



Examples of toxic air pollutants are: benzene, which is found in gasoline, and methylene chloride, which is used as a solvent and paint stripper.

Other listed air toxins are: dioxins, asbestos, toluene, and metals such as cadmium, mercury, chromium, and lead compounds.



Air Toxins



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Toxic Air Pollutants

Health and Environmental Effects of Toxic Air Pollutants

When people are exposed to toxic air pollutants they have a higher chance of getting cancer or suffering other serious health effects. The other health effects are: damage to the immune system, along with neurological and reproductive systems; developmental problems, respiratory problems, and various other health problems.

When breathing air toxins, some toxic air pollutants, like mercury, can deposit into soils and on surfaces of water, causing the plants and animals to ingest them. For places like Sand Point, we live off of subsistence, so if our plants and animals ingest these toxins, we can ingest them as well.

Animals can experience health problems, just like humans can, if they ingest massive amounts of toxics over time.



Oil on the water

Where do Air Toxins Come From?

Most air toxins come from human-made sources including vehicles; and stationary sources including power plants; as well as indoor sources like cleaning materials.

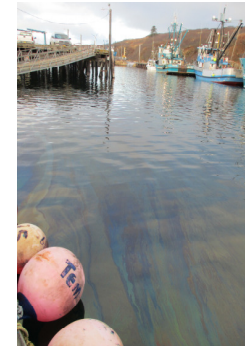
Air toxins can also come from natural sources such as volcanos and forest fires.

How are People Exposed to Air Toxins?

Many people are exposed to air toxins everyday, in many ways. Some ways we are exposed to air toxins, which can pose health risks, are: breathing contaminated air, eating contaminated food products, such as fish that have been exposed; drinking water that has been contaminated; and touching contaminated soil, dust, or water.

Once toxic contaminants enter the body, they can accumulate in body tissue. This is unhealthy for humans, animals, and plants.

Find out about the toxins in your community



Because the air toxins in our community fit those listed, it is advised that you are cautious and be very careful. Air toxins can cause harm to anyone

anywhere.

If you would like to find out what types of air toxins reside in your community, you can visit the National Air Toxics Assessment, which provides emissions and health risk information on 33 air toxics that present the greatest threat to public health; or the Toxics Release Inventory, which includes information for the public about releases of toxic chemicals; at:

<http://www.epa.gov/ttn/atw/natamain/>

<http://www2.epa.gov/toxics-release-inventory-tri-program>