



Name(s): _____

Date: _____

What Is Air Pollution? We get the oxygen we need by breathing air; it's a natural thing. We don't usually stop to think about what's in the air. However, besides elements like oxygen and nitrogen, the air we breathe may also contain pollutants. Air pollution is a problem that affects life all over the world. For example, you saw the pollutants that were collected on the dirty air filter. We can see these pollutant particles once they have accumulated on the filter, but we do not always see them in the air.

There are many kinds of air pollutants. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) calculates the Air Quality Index (AQI) for five major air pollutants regulated by the Clean Air Act: ground-level ozone, particle pollution (particulate matter), carbon monoxide, sulfur dioxide, and nitrogen dioxide. Ozone and particle pollution (particulate matter) are two common pollutants found in many parts of the country.

Many human activities create air pollution. In turn, the pollution causes problems for the health of humans and other life on our planet. To slow down that process, we can learn about what causes poor air quality and how to protect our life on Earth.

Here is your chance to learn more about air pollution. Check out Tox Town at toxtown.nlm.nih.gov and investigate all the different things you can breathe and how they can affect you.

Air Pollutant	How can I be exposed?	Impact on my health
Particulate Matter		
Nitrogen Oxides (Nitrogen Dioxide and Nitric Oxide)		
Ground-Level Ozone		
Sulfur Dioxide		
Carbon Monoxide		