

Particulate Matter (PM)

Definition

Particulate matter is the mixture of extremely small, solid particles and liquid droplets suspended in the air (dust, dirt, soot, or smoke, ash, metals and allergens), and other various solid and liquid chemicals found in the atmosphere.

Where does Particulate Matter come from?

Particulate Matter are emitted from construction sites, concrete batch plants, unpaved roads, fires, power plants, industries and automobiles. They can be "fine particles" ($PM_{2.5}$), and bigger "inhalable" particles (PM_{10}), found near roadways and dusty industries.

How might I be exposed to Particulate Matter?

You can be exposed if you live, or go to school or work near heavy construction sites, concrete batch plants, power plants, oil-burning sites, or highways with high transport/traffic-related air pollution.

Potential Health Effects

Exposure is linked to heart attacks, increased respiratory symptoms, and even premature death in people with those conditions. They are related to an increasing risk of cancer and reduced life expectancy.

How can I reduce the risk of exposure to Particulate Matter?

Stay indoors or limit outdoor activities on days with poor air quality. Certain filters and room air cleaners can help reduce indoor particle levels. Don't smoke inside and reduce the use of candles, wood-burning stoves and fireplaces.

