

Deadly Air Pollutants

Ozone: Created in the atmosphere when oxides of nitrogen combine with reactive organic gases in the presence of sunlight. These reactive organic gases are primarily generated by auto emissions, but industrial emissions as well. Once in the lungs, ozone generates a free radical, an oxygen atom, that irritates lung tissue—causing or exacerbating asthma, emphysema, respiratory disease and, over time, reduced lung capacity. Animal studies also indicate that ozone either causes or exacerbates cancers.

Carbon Monoxide: Everyone knows carbon monoxide as a colorless, odorless gas that comes out of the tailpipes of cars which, by blocking the delivery of oxygen to the blood, can kill you. But carbon monoxide in smaller doses causes dizziness, impairs central nervous system functioning, deprives the heart muscles of oxygen—leading to heart attacks, and is also a reproductive toxin.

Nitrogen Oxides: Toxic gases that give smog its yellow-brown coloring. They are produced as a result of burning fuel under high temperatures or pressure, from stationary sources, such as auto refineries and chemical plants, and mobile sources, mainly motor vehicles. Nitrogen oxide decreases lung function and can reduce resistance to infection, influenza, pneumonia, and other illnesses. Once in the atmosphere, it reacts to form ozone and particulate matter. It has also been shown, in animal studies, to increase the metastasis of pre-existing cancers, and accelerate the growth of cancer colonies in the lungs.

Particulate Matter: Consists of solid and liquid particulate less than ten microns in diameter that are suspended in the air and invisible to the eye. Nitrates, sulfates, and dust particles are major components of particulate matter and are created by fuel combustion, oil refineries, power plants, wear on break linings, and dust from paved roads—in short, all of the many components of the auto/oil/highway lobby. Some of these tiny particles are themselves highly carcinogenic. Other particles, which derive from incomplete combustion from vehicles and industrial sources, are not in themselves toxic, but as they circulate in the air, certain poisons, such as polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), dioxins, and furans, adhere to them. The particles facilitate the entry of the chemicals into the body where they are deposited or lodged in lung tissue—causing or facilitating the development of cancer.

& the **Race, Poverty Environment**

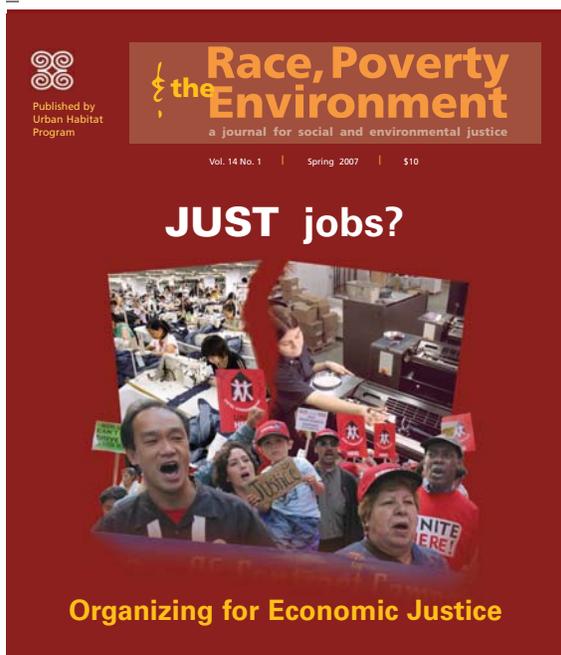
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