

The Earth is heating up at a rate approximately ten times faster than it should be and at this scenario of impending doom is why global warming should be the primary concern for all inhabitants of our planet.



Though there are many causes of global warming through pollution, air pollution caused by pollutants coming out of factories, automobiles, planes and trains, air conditioners, and refrigerators are one of the major ones responsible for it. Greenhouse gases that cause air pollution such as carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide, methane, etc. are the main contributors to global warming.

#### **Gases responsible :**

**Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) :** Described as a green house gas, Carbon Dioxide is regarded as the major contributor to air pollution. Due to our heavy dependence on fossil fuels to cover our energy needs, the amount of Carbon Dioxide in the atmosphere is over 200 ppm than pre-industrial times and there is more being let out each and every day.

**Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) :** Extremely efficient green house gas. Per unit volume, Methane causes more damage than the same amount of Carbon Dioxide.

**Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) :** The main reason for the depletion of the ozone layer. Produced by aerosol propellants and refrigerants which are banned now, because of their effect on the ozone layer.

**Sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) :** Produced by volcanic eruptions and other industries pollutes the air and contaminates the clouds, leading to acid rain.

#### **Effects of air pollution:**

The effects of air pollution is hazardous to our sustenance on earth. Some of them are:

It causes the depletion of the ozone layer that protects us from harmful UV radiations of the sun, which could cause skin cancer.

It also causes acid rain that can kill wildlife, harm humans and damage crops. Acid rain renders soil useless when it seeps into it.

Humans and animals can suffer from respiratory and heart diseases because of air pollution.

Ways to reduce air pollution:

Since the pollution of air can affect all living beings on earth on such a large scale, it is essential for us to find solutions to this problem. Some solutions are given below:

We can use bicycles or walk to or from our schools or work places. If the destination is far, the best we can do then is to car-pool or use public modes of transport, instead of using private vehicles. Thus, reducing the overall number of vehicles on the road, reducing the cumulative amount of cars resulting in pollution.

We can also switch fuels from diesel or petrol to CNG, just as people in our capital city of Delhi have done. If you cannot, use unleaded petrol or diesel only.

The use of air conditioners can be made only when absolutely necessary. We can use air coolers instead of air conditioners since they cause lesser pollution.

We must switch off all lights, computers and all electrical appliances when not in use.

We can use energy-efficient devices, such as CFL's and LED's rather than conventional light bulb's.

Burning of fossil fuels is responsible for a major portion of air pollution. So need to develop and employ alternative non-combustive sources of energy. Some being nuclear power, geothermal power, solar power, tidal power, wind power, etc.

In a country like India where festivals are celebrated with much zeal and enthusiasm, we must remember that the point of them is to spread joy and not cause pollution. So, we should say no to firecrackers.

Instead of burning waste we should sort our waste and recycle. Used paper can be recycled and reused. Instead of burning leaves fallen on the ground, we should make a compost out of them.

Spreading awareness about the dangers of air pollution is something that all of us can definitely do.

In recent studies it has been found out that there is a deficiency of Sulfur dioxide ( $\text{SO}_2$ ) coming from volcanoes can be used to block the sunlight, essentially helping to cool the planet.

Every step counts, so we should all incorporate these small changes in our daily life in order to save our planet from the evil of air pollution.

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