

AGRO-101

## Environmental Pollution

Human activities directly or indirectly affect the environment adversely. A stone crusher adds a lot of suspended particulate matter and noise into the atmosphere. Automobiles emit from their tail pipes oxides of nitrogen, sulphur dioxide, carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and a complex mixture of unburnt hydrocarbons and black soot which pollute the atmosphere. Domestic sewage and run off from agricultural fields, laden with pesticides and fertilizers, pollute water bodies. Effluents from tanneries contain many harmful chemicals and emit foul smell. These are only a few examples which show how human activities pollute the environment. Pollution may be defined as addition of undesirable material into the environment as a result of human activities. The agents which cause environmental pollution are called pollutants. A pollutant may be defined as a physical, chemical or biological substance unintentionally released into the environment which is directly or indirectly harmful to humans and other living organisms.

## Types of Pollution and health hazards

There are many different kinds of pollution and all of them have different effects on the environment and human health. Here is a brief introduction to the different kinds of pollution.

### Air Pollution

Air pollution is the contamination of the air when harmful contaminants are released into the air. One of the biggest effects of air pollution is global warming. It also causes other problems like acid rain, ozone layer depletion, etc. As a result of this, people are being exposed to more harmful UV rays that have increased the occurrence of cancer among people. In the long run, it can also make people get lung cancer, skin cancer etc. Some of the biggest causes of air pollution are cars, motorized vehicles, industries, etc.

Air pollution may cause damage in blood vessels

### Water pollution

Water pollution is the contamination of water bodies, such as ponds, lakes, rivers, oceans. Some of the biggest causes of water pollution are industrial effluents and people recklessly dumping waste in the water bodies. Water pollution can lead to loss of water resources for humans and it can also cause depletion of water life.

Pollution of water bodies deprive people of drinking water facilities. This is the reason why of all the types of pollution, water pollution is the one that is most obviously felt. Another hidden effects of pollution of water is the fact that the contaminants in water can damage the water life thereby affecting the entire food chain.

#### Light pollution

Light pollution is the pollution caused due to use of too much light, especially in urban areas. Light pollution is not something that seems like one of the types of pollution that would affect people, but that is not true. We have seen how animals do require the stars, the moon etc. for migrating and travelling during the night time.

They also need the dark for hunting and also to sleep well. In fact, one of the most harmful effects of pollution is the fact that it affects human sleep patterns. Humans need the dark to sleep properly and rest completely. As long as there are lights around, the brain would not completely rest. As a result of this, people will fall prey to problems like restlessness, fatigue, headache etc. In the extreme levels, it can even become insomnia.

#### Noise pollution

Noise pollution is one of the kinds of pollution caused mostly due to urbanization and industrialization. The diseases caused by pollution includes fatigue, irritation, insomnia etc. Noise pollution can cause all of the above. In fact, it is a well known cause for migraines. It can also cause loss of hearing at a really young age for a lot of people. Noise pollution, since it renders people incapable of sleeping and resting completely, can also cause insomnia in the long run, which would have a lot of health repercussions as well.

#### Soil Pollution

Soil pollution is contamination of the soil that is caused due to over dumping, over utilization of soil and excess chemicals being injected into the soil. Poor disposal systems, excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides in agriculture, etc. cause soil pollution, especially in agricultural areas. The plants would absorb all the harmful chemicals from the soil, thereby spoiling or even poisoning the person's food. Groundwater sources can also become contaminated due to soil pollution, which would cause water shortage problems as well.

There are many other forms of pollution that have also proven to be harmful for human health, such as thermal pollution (which is the pollution that causes the temperature level to rise in the country).

In order to battle pollution, it is essential for people to know more about it for they will be able to fight against pollution only if they are aware of what the types are and what the repercussions of not controlling pollution will be.