

The pollution

Pollution occurs when pollutants contaminate the natural surroundings; which brings about changes that affect our normal lifestyles adversely. Pollution disturbs our ecosystem and the balance in the environment. With modernization and development in our lives pollution has reached its peak; giving rise to global warming and human illness.

Pollution occurs in different forms; air, water, soil, radioactive, noise, heat/thermal and light.

Types & Causes of Pollution

Air Pollution is the most prominent and dangerous form of pollution. It occurs due to many reasons. Excessive burning of fuel which is a necessity of our daily lives for cooking, driving and other industrial activities; releases a huge amount of chemical substances in the air everyday; these pollute the air.

Smoke from chimneys, factories, vehicles or burning of wood basically occurs due to coal burning; this releases sulphur dioxide into the air making it toxic. The effects of air pollution are evident too. Release of sulphur dioxide and hazardous gases into the air causes global warming and acid rain; which in turn have increased temperatures, erratic rains and droughts worldwide; making it tough for the animals to survive. We breathe in every polluted particle from the air; result is increase in asthma and cancer in the lungs.

Water Pollution has taken toll of all the surviving species of the earth. Almost 60% of the species live in water bodies. It occurs due to several factors; the industrial wastes dumped into the rivers and other water bodies cause an imbalance in the water leading to its severe contamination and death of aquatic species.

Also spraying insecticides, pesticides like DDT on plants pollutes the ground water system and oil spills in the oceans have caused irreparable damage to the water bodies. Eutrophication is another big source; it

occurs due to daily activities like washing clothes, utensils near lakes, ponds or rivers; this forces detergents to go into water which blocks sunlight from penetrating, thus reducing oxygen and making it inhabitable. Water pollution not only harms the aquatic beings but it also contaminates the entire food chain by severely affecting humans dependent on these. Water-borne diseases like cholera, diarrhoea have also increased in all places.

Soil pollution occurs due to incorporation of unwanted chemicals in the soil due to human activities. Use of insecticides and pesticides absorbs the nitrogen compounds from the soil making it unfit for plants to derive nutrition from. Release of industrial waste, mining and deforestation also exploits the soil. Since plants can't grow properly, they can't hold the soil and this leads to soil erosion.

Noise pollution is caused when noise which is an unpleasant sound affects our ears and leads to psychological problems like stress, hypertension, hearing impairment, etc. It is caused by machines in industries, loud music, etc.

Radioactive pollution is highly dangerous when it occurs. It can occur due to nuclear plant malfunctions, improper nuclear waste disposal, accidents, etc. It causes cancer, infertility, blindness, defects at the time of birth; can sterilise soil and affect air and water.

Thermal/heat pollution is due to the excess heat in the environment creating unwanted changes over long time periods; due to huge number of industrial plants, deforestation and air pollution. It increases the earth's temperature, causing drastic climatic changes and extinction of wildlife.

Light pollution occurs due to prominent excess illumination of an area. It is largely visible in big cities, on advertising boards and billboards, in sports or entertainment events at the night. In residential areas the lives of the inhabitants is greatly affected by this. It also affects the astronomical observations and activities by making the stars almost invisible.

