

Pollutants from Incinerators



Pollutant	Health and Environmental Effects
Acid Gases	
Sulfur dioxide	Aggravates symptoms of heart and lung disease, including coughs and colds, asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema. Toxic to plants. Can erode statues and corrode metals. Precursor to acid rain.
Nitrogen oxides	High concentrations can be fatal; at lower levels, can increase susceptibility to viral infections such as influenza, irritate the lungs, and cause bronchitis and pneumonia. Toxic to plants. Precursor to acid rain.
Organics	
Dioxin and furans	A proven human carcinogen according to the World Health Organization's International Agency for Research on Cancer. An environmental hormone, dioxin interferes with the body's endocrine system. Causes reproductive and developmental problems. Linked to endometriosis. High levels of exposure from industrial accidents have resulted in chloracne, altered liver function and skin disorders. Chickoedima disease in birds; linked to breeding failure in herring gulls.
PCBs	In high exposures, can cause chloracne, liver disorders and jaundice. May cause birth defects.
Heavy Metals	
Lead	In chronic or acute exposures, children may suffer neurological disorders and women may experience reproductive problems. Probable human carcinogen according to U.S. EPA.
Inorganic mercury	Can cause serious neurological disorders and degenerative kidney problems. Linked to birth defects.
Methyl mercury	Reproductive toxin. Has been shown to cause tumors in mice at high doses. Also an endocrine-disrupting chemical, impairing normal thyroid functions.
Cadmium	Probable human carcinogen according to EPA. May cause lung cancer, also linked to kidney disorders.
Chromium	May cause liver and kidney damage and respiratory disorders.
Arsenic	Probable human carcinogen according to EPA. May cause liver and kidney damage.

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