



Our Environment: Why Clean Air is Important

Air pollution has many different causes and affects us in many different ways. Pause a moment to make a list of all the different types of air pollution you come across in a single day and you might be surprised. From car exhausts to cigarette smoke, garden bonfires to forest fires, rotting food on landfills to fumes from factories...each is an example of air pollution.

Air pollution can come in varying degrees on varying scales. A person burning a small bonfire certainly doesn't have the same effect as a large forest fire taking out swaths of California forest, just as a car's exhaust has a minimal impact when compared to a jet engine's exhaust.

The fact is, most of us probably take clean air for granted, for better or worse. Breathing in oxygen is so natural to us that we rarely even stop to realize that we're doing it, and thus, we rarely, if ever take into account the damage that is being done to the quality of our air. Of all the essential nutrients needed by the human, oxygen is the one we must have on a moment-to-moment basis. We can't live without it even for a few minutes. Since our bodies need oxygen to live, it is natural that the quality and quantity of oxygen should largely affect our health.

Because oxygen is so vital to our health and well-being, it is essential that we try to make sure that we are doing everything we can to make the air we breathe as clean as possible. Air that is polluted not only is hazardous to us, but it is hazardous to all animals. Having clean air requires that we all work together to make a difference.