

# Common Contaminants Answer Key

Pollutant	Source of Pollutant	Health Effects
Ozone	chemical reaction of pollutants (VOCs and NO <sub>x</sub> )	breathing problems, reduced lung function, asthma, irritation to eyes, stuffy nose, reduced resistance to colds and other infections, may speed up aging of lung tissue
VOCs (volatile organic compounds)	burning fuel (gasoline, oil, wood, coal, natural gas) solvents, paints, glues and other products	breathing problems, reduced lung function, asthma, irritation to eyes, stuffy nose, reduced resistance to colds and other infections, may speed up aging of lung tissue, can cause cancer
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO <sub>x</sub> )	burning of gasoline, natural gas, coal, oil	lung damage, illnesses of respiratory system
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	burning of gasoline, natural gas, coal, oil	reduces ability of blood to bring oxygen to cells and tissues which need oxygen to work; particularly toxic to those who have heart, circulatory or respiratory problems
Particulate Matter (PM-10)	burning of wood, diesel and other fuels; industrial plants; agriculture (plowing, burning off fields); unpaved roads	nose and throat irritation, lung damage, bronchitis, early death
Sulfur Dioxide	burning of coal and oil, especially high-sulfur coal; industrial processes (paper, metals)	breathing problems, may cause permanent damage to lungs
Lead	leaded gasoline (being phased out), paint (houses, cars), smelters (metal refineries); manufacture of lead storage batteries	brain and other nervous system damage; children are at special risk; some lead-containing chemicals cause cancer in animals; lead causes digestive and other health problems

