

# Opinion: Air pollution, which is increasing, can take years off people's lives

By Simon Upton, Project Syndicate, adapted by Newsela staff on 08.23.16

Word Count **386**



Residents wear face masks as smog hits the city on December 21, 2015 in Shanghai, China. Photo: James D. Morgan/ Getty Images

PARIS – Pollution is when air, water or earth is poisoned. Air pollution takes years off people's lives. Air pollution causes a lot of suffering. It can hurt grown people and children.

Air pollution can be both outdoors and indoors. Very poor families in some countries have indoor pollution. The pollution is from fire ovens. Outdoor air pollution is also becoming a big problem.

## **Better Technology Might Be Able To Help**

Some pollution is caused by things that create energy. Energy is becoming more and more needed around the world. We need it for cars, for cities and electricity. There is some technology that would lead to less pollution. This technology might make the air better.

Lawmakers often do not care, though. Many times, lawmakers care more about money. Creating new technologies would cost money. These lawmakers should think about the cost pollution will have on the future.

## **Study Says Outdoor Air Pollution Is On The Rise**

A new study says that outdoor air pollution is getting worse. It will hurt many people by the year 2060. Pollution can cause diseases or illnesses.

The study says more children and grown-ups could become sick. These illnesses will mean that more people will go to the hospital.

The pollution problems will most hurt places with a lot of people. China and India will likely have a lot of problems.

People often try to explain the cost of air pollution. They want to use money to show how bad pollution can be. By 2060, countries will lose a lot of money because of pollution. Air pollution will cause people to miss work. Missed work will mean less money for businesses. It will also make people spend money going to the hospital.

## **Some Lawmakers Care More About Money Than Lost Lives**

People can become sick from pollution. This is more important than money. Unfortunately, lawmakers often care more about losing money than about people getting sick.

The government did the math. Government officials figured out how much people would pay to not get sick from air pollution. This number is very large. It shows how much people want the government to help them.

It is time for governments to stop complaining about the cost of ending air pollution. They must start worrying about the people. Lives are in the government's hands.

## Quiz

- 1 Which sentence from the section "Better Technology Might Be Able To Help" gives examples of things that use energy?
- (A) Some pollution is caused by things that create energy
  - (B) We need it for cars, for cities and electricity.
  - (C) Creating new technologies would cost money.
  - (D) These lawmakers should think about the cost pollution will have on the future.
- 2 Select the sentence from the section "Study Says Outdoor Air Pollution Is On The Rise" that explains a problem air pollution will cause for businesses.
- (A) A new study says that outdoor air pollution is getting worse.
  - (B) China and India will likely have a lot of problems.
  - (C) People often try to explain the cost of air pollution.
  - (D) Air pollution will cause people to miss work.
- 3 What is the main idea of the section "Study Says Outdoor Air Pollution Is On The Rise"?
- (A) Illnesses caused by air pollution will lead to a lot of problems.
  - (B) The government does not care about people getting sick.
  - (C) New technologies would help stop air pollution.
  - (D) Air pollution can be both indoors and outdoors.
- 4 Read the following paragraph from the section "Some Lawmakers Care More About Money Than Lost Lives."

*The government did the math. Government officials figured out how much people would pay to not get sick from air pollution. This number is very large. It shows how much people want the government to help them.*

What is the focus of this paragraph?

- (A) People can get sick from pollution.
- (B) People would spend a lot of money to stay healthy.
- (C) The government is going to pay people who get sick.
- (D) The government does not know how to stop air pollution.

## Answer Key

- 1 Which sentence from the section "Better Technology Might Be Able To Help" gives examples of things that use energy?
- (A) Some pollution is caused by things that create energy
- (B) We need it for cars, for cities and electricity.**
- (C) Creating new technologies would cost money.
- (D) These lawmakers should think about the cost pollution will have on the future.
- 2 Select the sentence from the section "Study Says Outdoor Air Pollution Is On The Rise" that explains a problem air pollution will cause for businesses.
- (A) A new study says that outdoor air pollution is getting worse.
- (B) China and India will likely have a lot of problems.
- (C) People often try to explain the cost of air pollution.
- (D) Air pollution will cause people to miss work.**
- 3 What is the main idea of the section "Study Says Outdoor Air Pollution Is On The Rise"?
- (A) Illnesses caused by air pollution will lead to a lot of problems.**
- (B) The government does not care about people getting sick.
- (C) New technologies would help stop air pollution.
- (D) Air pollution can be both indoors and outdoors.
- 4 Read the following paragraph from the section "Some Lawmakers Care More About Money Than Lost Lives."

*The government did the math. Government officials figured out how much people would pay to not get sick from air pollution. This number is very large. It shows how much people want the government to help them.*

What is the focus of this paragraph?

- (A) People can get sick from pollution.
- (B) People would spend a lot of money to stay healthy.**
- (C) The government is going to pay people who get sick.
- (D) The government does not know how to stop air pollution.