

# Pollution Choice Simple: By 1990, Wear Mask or Die

Edmund Pinto

## POLLUTION CHOICE SIMPLE:

### By 1990, Wear Mask or Die

By EDMUND PINTO  
SCOTIA, N.Y. (AP) — The way some scientists see it, the choice will be simple:

Wear a special breathing mask or die from pollution.

That's the prospect for life in the Northern Hemisphere by 1990 if the present pollution rate continues, according to scientists at the Atmospheric Sciences Research Centre.

Here is their present view of the 1980s:

In 1980, 10,000 people will die in one metropolitan area of the United States, which will be inundated by a cloud of pollution;

In 10 to 15 years, every man, woman and child in the hemisphere will have to wear a breathing helmet to survive outdoors. Streets, for the most part, will be deserted;

Most animals and much plant life will be killed off;

In 20 years, man will live in domed cities

Even now, the scientists say, there is no more clean air left in the United States.

A six-year search was conducted by members of the research centre, part of the state university system.

"We have no solution. If we had a solution we wouldn't be fooling around with this stuff," said Alfred Hulstrunk, 40, a biologist who is assistant director of the centre which has 20 research scientists at the centre.

Air pollution, he says, has been increasing at a rate far greater than the air is able to cleanse itself.

The last vestiges of clean air the centre noted in the United States was near Flagstaff, Ariz., but it disappeared six years ago when, Hulstrunk said, air pollution from the California coast reached the northern Arizona city.

"We ran out of clean air, so to

speak. For six years we have been looking for some in the remotest parts of the United States."

He defines air pollution as at least 2,000 particles of pollution in a section of air half the size of a sugar cube. Most metropolitan areas today average 15,000 particles.

Their number is growing at the steady rate of 1,500 a year.

Hulstrunk says indications are the pollution level will be deadly for humans at 35,000 particles.

At the fatal point, Hulstrunk says, the only solution now apparent will be doomed cities.

"We can put on a semi-space suit and roam around a deserted and dead country. The people will be inside and all living things outside will be dead. Technology will have taken over completely."

Hulstrunk believes the solution will be found, that somehow, someday, man will prevail.

But for the near future, "we can see no improvement. We still see degradation ahead for our entire environment."

Air pollution's killing agent is a microscopic particle of matter that produces a violent reaction in a test tube, Hulstrunk said.

When the particles land on a house or a car they eat minuscule holes in their paint.

In the concentrated quantities of the next decade and later, when inhaled into a lung, he says, they will cause malignant tumors and kill.

The problems of overcoming air pollution are compounded by attempts to find answers to other seemingly unanswerable challenges to society.

For instance he said, California has allowed the use on an experimental basis of plastic beer containers that can be burned instead of just discarded. California has allowed the use on disposal.

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The Sun (Vancouver), 20 Dec 1969, page 12. <[www.books.google.co.uk](http://www.books.google.co.uk)> &  
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