

**AIR POLLUTION**  
**Its Origin and Control**

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Kenneth Wark

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Purdue University

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# Preface

This text was developed over the past four years from notes written for an introductory air pollution course for engineers and scientists. The students, primarily from mechanical, civil, chemical, and environmental engineering, who used these notes had widely varying technical backgrounds, but they all had knowledge of a common set of basic physical principles. We sought to develop every major topic from these first principles. Hence the material should be suitable for a variety of engineers who wish to gain an introduction to the field of air pollution and its control.

An understanding of the fundamentals of thermodynamics is assumed, including the concepts of chemical equilibrium for chemically reactive ideal-gas mixtures typically presented in a second course in engineering thermodynamics. A grasp of basic concepts in chemical kinetics is important to understand fully the origin and persistence of numerous pollutants. Since this subject matter is not commonly taught in many undergraduate engineering programs, we present the required principles in a separate section of this text. Their use is then illustrated in subsequent sec-

tions for specific areas of interest. We also review some of the basic principles of mass transfer before presenting the control methods involving absorption.

Although we can anticipate the gradual changeover to S. I. units, a massive proportion of the data available in the literature is in units peculiar to a particular area of interest. Hence a student of air pollution control must be conversant with—and tolerant of—a large set of diverse engineering units. To minimize this problem, Appendix B contains conversion tables for a number of units commonly used in the field. In the text's problem sections, we use S. I. units wherever feasible.

The text presents information on four broad areas of interest in the air pollution field. First, the effects of pollutants on health and welfare are described briefly; second, federal laws and regulations that have been promulgated in an attempt to achieve reasonable ambient air quality are summarized; and third, a model for atmospheric dispersion of pollutants, including meteorological effects on dispersion patterns, is developed. The fourth area concerns the general and specific approaches to the control of emissions from sources—small- and large-scale, mobile and stationary, combustion and noncombustion—and is covered in detail. The physical and chemical mechanisms responsible for the effectiveness of a given control device are presented in some depth as are the physical configuration and important macroscopic parameters associated with each device. In addition, we comment briefly on the instrumentation required for the accurate and reliable monitoring of pollutants in gas streams and in the environment. The subject of instrumentation has not been covered in any depth, since any realistic coverage would require an inordinate amount of space. Innumerable articles and books on instrumentation are available in the current literature. Although we present some economic data, especially for comparative purposes, we do not attempt a comprehensive list of cost factors because construction and operating costs are subject to considerable variation. Cost data are readily available from fabricators of pollution control equipment. A list of references is included at the end of each chapter, as well as discussion questions and problems.

It is not possible for any air pollution control text of moderate length to present complete coverage of the field. The space devoted to any particular topic, and the omission of other topics, is mainly a matter of the author's choice. In addition, air pollution control is an active and creative field; new methods of control and measurement are constantly being introduced. New or modified laws and regulations are continually being promulgated, albeit at a slower pace than the initial flurry of legislative activity in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Only regular perusal of the current literature will enable the reader to keep abreast of the development in this rapidly changing field.

# Symbols

## LETTER SYMBOLS

$A$	Cross-sectional area
$a$	Absorption coefficient for light Acceleration
$B$	Magnetic field intensity
$C$	Concentration
$C_D$	Drag coefficient
$Coh$	Coefficient of haze
$c_p$	Specific heat at constant pressure
$D$	Dielectric constant Mass diffusivity
$D_L$	Liquid-phase diffusion coefficient
$d$	Distance Stack diameter

# xiv Symbols

$E$	Activation energy
	Electric field strength
$e$	Electric charge
$F$	Dimensional parameter in plume-rise evaluation
	Force
$G$	Gas flow rate
$g$	Gravitational acceleration
$g_c$	Gravitational constant
$H$	Effective stack height
	Height of gravity settling chamber
$H_t$	Height of a transfer unit
$h$	Actual stack height
	Enthalpy
$\Delta h$	Plume rise
$I$	Light intensity
$K$	Dust permeability
	Eddy diffusion coefficient
	Mass transfer coefficient
	Scattering ratio
$K_c$	Cunningham correction factor
$K_p$	Ideal-gas equilibrium constant
$k$	Boltzmann's constant
	Mass transfer coefficient
	Rate constant
	Specific heat ratio, $c_p/c_v$
$L$	Length
	Liquid flow rate
$L_v$	Limit of visibility
$M$	Molar mass (molecular weight)
$m$	Mass
	Refractive index
<b>MB</b>	million Btu
$N$	Mass transfer per unit time and unit area
	Number of particles per unit volume
$N_e$	Number of effective turns in a cyclone
$N_i$	Impaction number
$N_t$	Number of transfer units
$n$	Exponent in wind velocity profile
$P$	Pressure
	Odor intensity
$p$	Pressure
$Q$	Mass emission rate, mass per unit time
	Volume flow rate

$Q_n$	Heat emission rate, energy per unit time
$q$	Electric charge
	Emission source strength per unit length
	Quantity of heat transfer
$R$	Ideal-gas constant
	Radius
$Re$	Reynolds number, $DV_\mu/\rho$
$r$	Radius (of particle)
$S$	Filter drag
	Odor concentration
	Separation distance
$s$	Scattering coefficient for light
$T$	Temperature
$T_{\text{frac}}$	Fractional light transmission
$t$	Time
$u$	Internal energy
	Wind speed
$V$	Velocity
	Volume
	Voltage
$v$	Specific volume
$W$	Mass of adsorbent
	Width
$w$	Drift velocity
	Work interaction
$X$	Liquid-phase mole ratio
$x$	Distance or coordinate
	Mole fraction
$x_s$	Stopping distance
$Y$	Gas-phase mole ratio
$y$	Distance or direction
	Gas-phase mole fraction
$z$	Distance or direction

## GREEK SYMBOLS

$\eta$	Efficiency
$\theta$	Potential temperature
$\Gamma$	Adiabatic lapse rate
$\lambda$	Wavelength



## xvi Symbols

$\mu$	Microns (micrometers) Parameter in Gaussian distribution Viscosity
$\rho$	Density
$\rho_e$	Electrical resistivity
$\sigma$	Extinction coefficient Standard deviation
$\phi$	Angle Equivalence ratio
$v$	Ion velocity

## SUBSCRIPTS

$a$	Atmosphere
$C$	Carrier gas
$G$	Gas phase
$i$	$i$ th species
$L$	Liquid phase
$m$	Molar value
$OG$	Over-all gas-phase value
$OL$	Over-all liquid-phase value
$S$	Solvent
$s$	Stack
$x$	Based on mole fraction in liquid phase
$y$	Based on mole fraction in gas phase

# Contents

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>xi</b>
<b>SYMBOLS</b>	<b>xiii</b>
<b>1</b>	
<b>EFFECTS AND SOURCES OF AIR POLLUTANTS</b>	<b>1</b>
1-1 Introduction	1
1-2 Air Pollution Episodes	2
1-3 General Nature of Air Pollution Problems	3
1-4 Definition and General Listing of Air Pollutants	5
1-5 Particulate Matter	9
1-6 Carbon Monoxide	20
1-7 Sulfur Oxides	26
1-8 Effects of Hydrocarbons, Oxides of Nitrogen, Photochemical Oxidants, Asbestos, and Metals on Materials and Health	32

## vi Contents

1-9 Injury to Vegetation	34
1-10 Sources of Air Pollutants	37
1-11 Four Basic Assumptions	40
Questions	41
Problems	41
References	43

## 2

<b>FEDERAL LEGISLATION AND REGULATORY TRENDS</b>	<b>47</b>
2-1 Introduction	47
2-2 The History of Federally Enacted Laws	48
2-3 Air Quality Criteria and Ambient Air Quality Emission Standards	55
2-4 National Emission or Performance Standards	57
2-5 Implementation of and Compliance with Standards	62
Questions	64
Problems	65
References	66

## 3

<b>METEOROLOGY</b>	<b>69</b>
3-1 Introduction	69
3-2 Solar Radiation	70
3-3 Wind Circulation	73
3-4 Lapse Rate	78
3-5 Stability Conditions	81
3-6 Wind Velocity Profile	87
3-7 Mean Mixing Depth	90
3-8 Wind Rose	93
3-9 Turbulence	95
3-10 General Characteristics of Stack Plumes	96
3-11 Heat Island Effect	101
3-12 Global Circulation of Pollutants	102
Questions	104
Problems	105
References	106

## 4

<b>DISPERSION OF POLLUTANTS IN THE ATMOSPHERE</b>	<b>109</b>
4-1 Introduction	109
4-2 The Eddy Diffusion Model	110
4-3 The Gaussian or Normal Distribution	112
4-4 The Gaussian Dispersion Model	114
4-5 Evaluation of the Standard Deviations	119
4-6 The Maximum Ground-Level In-Line Concentration	124
4-7 Calculation of the Effective Stack Height	127

4-8	Some Other Considerations Regarding Gaseous Dispersion	132
	Appendix Development of the Gaussian-Type Dispersion Equation	139
	Questions	143
	Problems	144
	References	149

## 5

<b>PARTICULATE</b>	<b>153</b>
5-1 Introduction	153
5-2 Distribution and Sources of Particular Matter	156
5-3 Particulate Collection Efficiency	163
5-4 Terminal or Settling Velocity	169
5-5 Deposition of Particulates from Stacks	173
5-6 Hood and Duct Design	178
5-7 Particulate Collection Mechanisms	181
5-8 Particulate Control Equipment	182
5-9 Comparison of Particulate Control Equipment	227
Questions	230
Problems	231
References	241

## 6

<b>GENERAL CONTROL OF GASES AND VAPORS</b>		<b>245</b>
6-1	Introduction	245
6-2	Adsorption	246
6-3	Absorption	256
6-4	Basic Design of a Packed Absorption Tower	265
6-5	Determination of an Absorption Tower Height	277
6-6	Fundamentals of Chemical Kinetics	285
6-7	Kinetics of Carbon Monoxide Formation	292
6-8	Carbon Monoxide Emission Control	295
6-9	Monitoring of Carbon Monoxide and Hydrocarbons	297
6-10	Incineration or Afterburning	298
6-11	Reaction Kinetics and Catalysis in Afterburning Processes	313
	Questions	318
	Problems	319
	References	324

## 7

<b>CONTROL OF SULFUR OXIDES</b>	<b>327</b>
7-1 Introduction	327
7-2 Thermodynamics and Kinetics of Sulfur Oxide Formation	332
7-3 General Control Methods	335
7-4 Flue-Gas Desulfurization Processes	341
7-5 Monitoring Methods for Sulfur Dioxide	351

Questions	353
Problems	353
References	353

## 8

### CONTROL OF OXIDES OF NITROGEN FROM STATIONARY SOURCES 357

8-1 Introduction	357
8-2 Sources and Concentrations of NO <sub>x</sub>	359
8-3 Thermodynamics of NO and NO <sub>2</sub> Formation	363
8-4 Kinetics of Nitric Oxide Formation in Combustion Processes	368
8-5 NO <sub>x</sub> Formation from Fuel Nitrogen	376
8-6 Combustion Control Methods for NO <sub>x</sub> from Stationary Sources	377
8-7 Flue-Gas Control Methods for NO <sub>x</sub>	384
8-8 Monitoring for Oxides of Nitrogen	388
Questions	389
Problems	390
References	391

## 9

### ATMOSPHERIC PHOTOCHEMICAL REACTIONS 395

9-1 Introduction	395
9-2 Thermodynamics of Photochemical Reactions	395
9-3 Monatomic Oxygen and Ozone Formation	397
9-4 Role of Oxides of Nitrogen in Photooxidation	397
9-5 Hydrocarbons in Atmospheric Photochemistry	401
9-6 Oxidants in Photochemical Smog	405
9-7 Hydrocarbon Reactivity	407
9-8 Daily History of Pollutants in Photochemical Smog	409
9-9 Oxidation of Sulfur Dioxide in Polluted Atmospheres	411
9-10 Monitoring of Photochemical Oxidants	414
Questions	415
Problems	415
References	415

## 10

### MOBILE SOURCES 417

10-1 Introduction	417
10-2 Emission Standards for Automobiles	418
10-3 Gasoline	421
10-4 Origin of Exhaust Emissions from Gasoline Engines	423
10-5 Crankcase and Evaporative Emissions	429
10-6 Emission Reduction by Fuel Changes	432
10-7 Emission Reduction by Engine Design Changes	434
10-8 External Reactors	438
10-9 Stratified-Charge Engines	440
10-10 Rotary Combustion Engines	442

10-11 Alternate Vehicle Power Sources	442
10-12 Diesel Engine Emissions	445
10-13 Turbojet Engine and Gas Turbine Emissions	448
Questions	459
Problems	461
References	462

# 11

## **ODOR CONTROL 465**

11-1 Introduction	465
11-2 The Sense of Smell and Theories of Odor	466
11-3 Chemical Composition and Odor	468
11-4 Physical Properties of Odorous Substances	469
11-5 Odor Measurement Techniques	472
11-6 Odor Threshold Values	476
11-7 Applications of Odor Measurements	477
11-8 Odor Control Methods	480
Questions	483
Problems	484
References	484

## **APPENDIX A INSTRUMENTATION 487**

A-1 Introduction	487
A-2 Sampling Train	488
A-3 Particulate Analysis	489
A-4 Gas Analysis	490
References	498

## **APPENDIX B MEASUREMENT QUANTITIES 501**

B-1 Conversion Factors	501
B-2 Universal Gas Constant and Gravitational Acceleration	502
B-3 Properties of Air	502
B-4 Molar Masses of Various Substances, M	502

## **INDEX 503**

# 1

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## Effects and Sources of Air Pollutants

### 1-1 INTRODUCTION

Air pollution is woven throughout the fabric of our modern life. A by-product of the manner in which we build our cities, air pollution is waste remaining from the ways we produce our goods, transport ourselves and our goods, and generate the energy to heat and light the places where we live, play, and work. The major cause of all air pollution is combustion, and combustion is essential to man. When perfect or theoretical combustion occurs, the hydrogen and carbon in the fuel combine with oxygen from the air to produce heat, light, carbon dioxide, and water vapor. However, impurities in the fuel, poor fuel-to-air ratio, or too high or too low combustion temperatures cause the formation of such side products as carbon monoxide, sulfur oxides, nitrogen oxides, fly ash, and unburned hydrocarbons—all air pollutants.

## 2 Effects and Sources of Air Pollutants

Air pollution is not a recent phenomenon. King Edward I of England tried to clear the smoky sky over London in 1272 by banning the use of "sea coal." The British Parliament ordered the torturing and hanging of a man who sold and burned the outlawed coal. Under Richard III (1377–1399) and later under Henry V (1413–1422), England took steps to regulate and restrict the use of coal [1]. One of the earliest recorded publications dealing with air pollution is a pamphlet published in 1661 by royal command of Charles II: "Fumifugium; or the Inconvenience of the Air and Smoke of London Dissipated; together with Some Remedies Humbly Proposed," written by John Evelyn, one of the founding members of the Royal Society [1]. The use of coal in the generation of energy was a major factor in the Industrial Revolution, which formed the basis of our current technological society. Unfortunately, intimately associated with the benefits of our technological society is the fouling and degrading of our environment. One of the earliest legal attempts to control air pollution in the United States appears to be an 1895 ordinance making illegal the "showing of visible vapor" as exhaust from steam automobiles.

Such natural processes as forest fires, decaying vegetation, dust storms, and volcanic eruptions have always contaminated the air. Although the total global production of many gases and particulate matter recognized as pollutants is much greater from natural sources than from man-made sources, global distribution and dispersion of those pollutants result in low average concentrations. By precipitation, oxidation, and absorption into the oceans and the soil, the atmosphere can cleanse itself of all known pollutants given sufficient time [2, 3]. On the other hand, man-generated pollutants are usually concentrated in small geographic regions; hence most air pollution is truly man-made. In the United States alone, over 200 million tons of gaseous, solid, and liquid waste products are discharged annually into the atmosphere. Currently the rate at which pollutants are discharged into the atmosphere in highly populated regions at time exceeds the cleansing rate of the atmosphere.

### 1-2 AIR POLLUTION EPISODES

Although limited air pollution was experienced as early as 1272, it has become a major problem only in relatively recent years, considering man's total history. In December, 1930, a heavily industrialized section of the Meuse Valley, in Belgium, experienced a severe 3-day fog during which hundreds of people became ill and 60 died—more than 10 times the normal number. Shortly afterward, during a thick 9-day fog in January, 1931, 592 people in the Manchester and Salford area of England died—again a large jump in the death rate. In 1948, in Donora, Pennsyl-



vania, a small mill town dominated by steel and chemical plants, a 4-day fog made almost half of the 14,000 inhabitants sick. Twenty persons died. Ten years later, Donora residents who had been acutely ill during that episode were found to have a higher rate of sickness and to die at an earlier age than the average for all the townspeople. During a fog in London as far back as 1873, 268 unexpected deaths from bronchitis were reported. It was not until a great fog blanketed London in 1952 that the sinister potential of air pollution became fully apparent. That fog lasted from December 5 to December 8, and 10 days later it was learned that the total number of deaths in Greater London during that period exceeded the average by 4000. The statistics indicated that almost all those who died unexpectedly had records of bronchitis, emphysema, or heart trouble, and that people in the last category were most vulnerable. Again in January, 1956, 1000 extra deaths in London were blamed on an extended fog. In that year, Parliament passed a Clean Air Act and Britain embarked on a program to reduce the burning of soft coal [4]. The smog conditions of Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, and other large cities of the United States are widely publicized in today's press.

The misuse of air resources in the USSR is not very different from that in this country. Despite the fact that Russia's current yearly production of cars is one-tenth that of the United States, most Soviet cities experience varying degrees of air pollution. Cities situated in valleys or hilly regions are especially likely to experience dangerous levels of air pollution. In the hilly cities of Armenia, for example, the established health standards for carbon monoxide are often exceeded. Similarly, Magnitogorsk, Alma Ato, and Chelyabinsk, with their metallurgical industries, are frequently covered with a layer of dark blue haze. Like Los Angeles, Tbilisi, the capital of the Republic of Georgia, has smog almost 6 months of the year. Leningrad has 40 percent fewer clear daylight hours than the nearby town of Pavlovsk [5].

### 1-3 GENERAL NATURE OF AIR POLLUTION PROBLEMS

Only a finite amount of air, land, and water resources exist, and as population increases, the portion available for each person decreases. From the beginning of time until 1900, the population of the world increased to 1.7 billion. By 1974 world population had reached 3.9 billion, and the awesome figure of 7 billion is estimated by the year 2000. The population of the United States has followed a similar trend. In addition, technological advances in the field of agriculture have greatly reduced the number of jobs in rural areas. As in other developed countries, today two-thirds of the population lives in urban areas comprising about 1 percent