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Controlling Air Pollution: Is the Pain Worth the Gain?

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York University

Room 101, Moot Court, Osgoode Hall Law School 4700 Keele Street, Toronto

Centre for Atmospheric Chemistry



Abstract

Epidemiological studies, conducted in several countries, have consistently demonstrated associations between ambient concentrations of ambient air pollution and adverse health outcomes, including premature mortality, cardio-respiratory hospitalizations, emergency department visits for respiratory diseases, asthma attacks, respiratory symptoms, and restricted activity. These associations have prompted regulatory agencies in several countries, including Canada, to either revise current air pollution standards or establish new guidelines. Recent epidemiological research in Canada linking air quality and health is reviewed. Economic approaches to evaluating costs and health benefits of controlling air pollutants are discussed, and their use is illustrated in evaluating the consequences of reducing the sulphur content of gasoline. Ongoing epidemiological research on the health effects of air pollution is outlined.

Biographical Sketch

Richard Burnett received his doctorate in Mathematical Statistics at Queen's University in 1982 and has been working in the area of environmental health risk assessment at Health Canada since 1983. His interests include the use of administrative health and environmental information in assessing the public health impacts of ambient air pollution, nonlinear random effects regression models, errors in variables analyses, and priority setting within the public health context. Dr. Burnett has been an advisor on air pollution health effects issues to the USEPA, and several Canadian federal and provincial government departments.

The Lectureship Fund

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If you share in Morris Katz' enthusiasm and commitment to having a cleaner environment, please make a contribution to support this ongoing educational activity. Send your contribution in care of: The Morris Katz Memorial Lectureship, Centre for Atmospheric Chemistry, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Toronto, Ontario, M3J 1P3 Canada.

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