

characteristics of the ventilation system, including the efficiency of air filters.

Air cleaners

Offermann et al (117) conducted chamber tests to evaluate portable air cleaners for their effectiveness in controlling indoor levels of respirable particles. Mixing fans, ion generators and small panel-filter devices were ineffective for particle removal. In contrast, electrostatic precipitators, extended surface filters and HEPA filter units worked well, with effective cleaning rates (for removal of 98 per cent of particles in a room) of 100-300 m³/hr.

The Ministry of the Environment (ENV) of Singapore conducted an assessment of the use of portable air cleaners for homes, during period of biomass air pollution (118). The ENV found that several models of portable air cleaners were able to reduce the level of fine particles in a typical living room or bedroom to an acceptable level when there is an intense biomass episode. The ENV also suggest that households can add a special filter to window or split-unit air-conditioners to achieve similar results for particle removal. For central air conditioning systems, electrostatic precipitators, high-efficiency media filters and medium-efficiency media filters can be added so that the particle level in the indoor air can be kept within acceptable levels during a prolonged biomass smoke period.

Portable air cleaners were also discussed in a US EPA report (119). Studies have been performed on portable air cleaners, assessing particle removal from the air in room-size test chambers or extensively weatherized or unventilated rooms. All of the tests addressed removal of particles from cigarette smoke, which is similar in size to biomass smoke. The studies show varying degrees of effectiveness of portable air cleaners in removing particles from indoor air. In general, units containing either electrostatic precipitators, negative ion generators, or pleated filters, and hybrid units containing combinations of these mechanisms, are more effective than flat filter units in removing cigarette smoke particles. However, effectiveness within these classes varies widely. The use of a single portable unit would not be expected to be effective in large buildings with central heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC)

systems. Portable units are designed to filter the air in a limited area only.

The effectiveness of air cleaners in removing pollutants from the air is a function of both the efficiency of pollutant removal as it goes through the device and the amount of air handled. A product of these two factors (for a given pollutant) is expressed as the unit's clean air delivery rate (CADR). The Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers (AHAM) has developed an American National Standards Institute (ANSI)-approved standard for portable air cleaners (ANSI/AHAM Standard AC-1-1988)²⁵. This standard may be useful in estimating the effectiveness of portable air cleaners. Under this standard, room air cleaner effectiveness is rated by a CADR for each of three particle types: tobacco smoke, dust, and pollen. For induct systems, the atmospheric dust spot test of ASHRAE Standard 52-76 and the DOP method in Military Standard 282 may be used, respectively, to estimate the performance of medium and high efficiency air cleaners (119).

Table 7 shows the percentage of particles removed from indoor air in rooms of various size by rated CADR, as estimated by AHAM. The table provides estimates of the percent of particles removed by the air cleaner and the total removal by both the air cleaner and by natural settling. If the source is continuous, the devices would not be expected to be as effective as suggested by Table 7. In addition, the values represent a performance that can be expected during the first 72 hours of use. Subsequent performance may vary depending on conditions of use.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF HEALTH PROTECTION MEASURES

As discussed above, the hierarchy for health protection is control or prevention of fires followed by administrative controls such as reduced physical activity and remaining indoors. To enhance the protection offered by remaining indoors, individuals/building managers should take action to reduce the air exchange rate. Clearly there are comfort and economic costs associated with reduced air exchange, as well as potential health effects due to increased impact of indoor pollution sources. It is not possible at this time to recommend more specific measures which would be feasible to employ on a population-wide basis. There is

evidence that air conditioners, especially those with efficient filters, will substantially reduce indoor particle levels. To the extent possible, effective filters should be installed in existing air conditioning systems and individuals should seek environments protected by such systems. There is strong evidence that portable air cleaners are effective at reducing indoor particle levels, provided the specific cleaner is adequately matched to the indoor environment in which it is placed. Fortunately most air cleaners have been evaluated by manufacturers and their effectiveness is known. Unfortunately, economics will limit the distribution of such devices throughout the population. As with air conditioners the increased use of such devices by a large segment of the population will have a significant impact on energy consumption, and may in turn have negative impacts on ambient air quality. The least desirable measure is the use of personal protective equipment, such as dust masks. While these are relatively inexpensive and may be distributed to a large segment of the population, at present their effectiveness for general population use must be questioned. Education of the population regarding specific mask types to purchase, how to wear masks and when to replace them will increase their effectiveness as well as the development of new masks designed for general population use.

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Table 1
Summary of major biomass pollutants

Compound	Examples	Source	Notes
Inorganic Gases	Carbon monoxide (CO)	Incomplete combustion of organic material	Transported over distances
	Ozone (O ₃)	Secondary product of nitrogen oxides and hydrocarbons	Only present downwind of fire, transported over distances
	Nitrogen dioxide (NO ₂)	High temperature oxidation of nitrogen in air	Reactive- concentrations decrease with distance from fire
Hydrocarbons	Benzene	Incomplete combustion of organic material	Some transport - also react to form organic aerosols
Aldehydes	Acrolein	Incomplete combustion of organic material	
	Formaldehyde (HCHO)	Incomplete combustion of organic material	
Particles	Inhalable particles (PM ₁₀)	Condensation of combustion gases; incomplete combustion of organic material; entrainment of vegetation and ash fragments	Coarse and fine particles. Coarse particles are not transported and contain mostly soil and ash
	Respirable particulate matter	Condensation of combustion gases; incomplete combustion of organic material	For biomass smoke, approximately equal to fine particles
	Fine particles (PM _{2.5})	Condensation of combustion gases; incomplete combustion of organic material	Transported over long distances; primary and secondary production
Polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs)	Benzo[a]pyrene (BaP)	Condensation of combustion gases, incomplete combustion or organic material	Specific species varies with composition of biomass

Table 2
Summary of epidemiological studies on occupational exposure of
wildland firefighters

Study design	Endpoints measured	Results	Reference
Longitudinal	Symptoms, lung function	Decreased cross-shift and cross-season lung function	32
Prevalence	Symptoms	High prevalence of headaches, lightheadedness, cough, shortness of breath, wheeze	33
Longitudinal	Symptoms, lung function	Slightly decreased cross-season lung function. No increase in symptoms	34
Longitudinal	Symptoms, lung function	Increase in cross-season symptoms. Slight decrease in cross-season lung function. Increased symptoms associated with increased recent firefighting.	35
Longitudinal	Lung function, airways responsiveness	Cross-season increase in airways responsiveness and decreased lung function	36
Cross-sectional	Lung function	Decreased lung function in firefighters measured 11 months post-exposure relative to unexposed control group. No association between years of firefighting and lung function.	37

Table 3
Summary of epidemiological studies on indoor exposure (high level)

Population	Study design	Endpoints measured	Results	Reference
Children in Papua New Guinea	Cross-sectional	Symptoms	Increased cough and rhinitis in high exposure group. Increased wheeze in low exposure group.	122
Children in Papua New Guinea	Prospective	Symptoms	No difference in symptoms between the two exposure groups	122
Adult women in Papua New Guinea	Cross-sectional	Lung function	10 per cent of women >45 years had FEV ₁ /FVC < 60 per cent. No control group	123
Children in South Africa	Cross-sectional	Respiratory illness	Increased serious lower respiratory illness in exposed group	124
Adults in Nepal	Cross-sectional	Respiratory illness	Increased chronic bronchitis prevalence with increasing hours of exposure	79
Children in Nepal	Cross-sectional	Respiratory illness	Increased severe respiratory illness with increased hours of exposure	125
Children in Malaysia	Cross-sectional	Lung function	Decreased lung function with home wood stove	126
Children in Malaysia	Cross-sectional	Symptoms	Slight increase in cough and phlegm prevalence in exposed group	127
Children in Kenya	Cross-sectional	Respiratory illness	No increase in illness rates for exposed children	19
Children in Gambia	Cross-sectional	Respiratory illness	Increased acute respiratory infection risk in girls exposed while carried on mothers' back. No effect in boys.	20
Children in Zimbabwe	Cross-sectional	Respiratory illness	Increased lower respiratory illness with wood smoke exposure (blood COHb)	39
Adult, non-smoking women in India	Cross-sectional	Lung function	Reduced FEV ₁ /FVC with increased exposure (expired CO)	128

Table 3 (continued)
Summary of epidemiological studies on indoor exposure (high level)

Population	Study design	Endpoints measured	Results	Reference
Adult women in Mexico	Case series	COPD	COPD in non-smoking women	43
Adults in China	Cross-sectional	Lung function	Increased lung function in adults with vented stoves. Decreased lung function with time spent cooking. County-wide COPD mortality highest in countries with lowest lung function	44
Adult women in Mexico	Case-control	COPD	COPD in non-smoking women	17
Adult women in Mexico	Cross-sectional	Symptoms, lung function	Slightly reduced lung function and increased cough and phlegm in women with highest PM ₁₀ exposure	41
Adult women in Mozambique	Cross-sectional	Symptoms	Increased cough symptoms in wood smoke exposed group (relative to charcoal, gas, electric). No increase in other respiratory symptoms (wheeze, difficulty breathing, etc.)	40
Adult women in Colombia	Case-control	COPD	COPD in non-smoking women	42

Table 4
Combined effect estimates of daily mean PM₁₀ (46)

	per cent change per each 10 µg/m ³ increase in PM ₁₀
INCREASE IN DAILY MORTALITY	
Total deaths	1.0
Respiratory deaths	3.4
Cardiovascular deaths	1.4
INCREASE IN HOSPITAL USAGE (all respiratory)	
Admissions	.8
Emergency department visits	1.0
EXACERBATION OF ASTHMA	
Asthmatic attacks	3.0
Bronchodilator	2.9
Emergency department visits	3.4
Hospital admissions	1.9
INCREASE IN RESPIRATORY Symptoms reports	
Lower respiratory	3.0
Upper respiratory	0.7
Cough	1.2
DECREASE IN LUNG FUNCTION	
Forced expiratory volume	0.15
Peak expiratory flow	0.08

Source: Dockery and Pope (46).

Table 5
Summary of epidemiological studies on indoor exposure (low level)

Population	Study design	Endpoints measured	Results	Reference
Children	Cross-sectional	Symptoms	No association between respiratory illness and home wood burning	81
Children	Cross-sectional	Symptoms	Increased cough, wheeze, allergic symptoms with home wood burning	77
Children	Cross-sectional	Symptoms, respiratory illness	Increased history of chest illness in past year with home wood burning; no effect on symptoms	76
Children	Longitudinal	Symptoms	Increased frequency of wheeze and cough with increased hours of wood stove use	82
Children < 2 years	Longitudinal	Respiratory illness	Increased risk of lower respiratory illness with wood burning	84
Children	Cross-sectional	Symptoms, respiratory illness, lung function	No increased symptoms or illness and no decreased lung function with home wood burning	2
Children	Case-control	Hospitalisation for respiratory illness	Increased hospitalisation with home wood burning - results dependent upon control group	2
Adult asthmatics	Longitudinal	Symptoms	Increased cough, shortness of breath on days with home wood burning	86
Children < 2 years	Case-control	Respiratory illness	Increased acute respiratory illness in wood burning homes with $PM_{10} > 65 \mu g/m^3$	85

Table 6
Summary of epidemiological studies on ambient exposure

Population	Study design	Endpoints measured	Results	Reference
All ages > 1	Cross-sectional	Symptoms, respiratory illness	No significant effects. Trend for children 1-5	88
Children	Longitudinal	Lung function	Decreased lung function during and after wood burning season in exposed community but not in control community.	30
Children	Longitudinal	Lung function	Decreased winter lung function in exposed community but not in control community	87
Children	Longitudinal	Spirometry	Decreased lung function and fine particles in asthmatics	89
All ages	Longitudinal	Emergency room visits	Increased asthma visits with fine particles in areas where wood smoke accounts for 80 per cent of PM _{2.5}	66
All ages	Longitudinal	Emergency room visits	Increased asthma visits with PM ₁₀ in area where wood smoke accounts for 45 per cent of winter PM ₁₀	91
All ages	Longitudinal	Mortality	Increased daily mortality with PM ₁₀ in areas where wood smoke accounts for 45 per cent of winter PM ₁₀	90
All ages	Longitudinal	Emergency room visits	Increased respiratory visits in community exposed to fire smoke	97
Adult asthmatics	Experimental	Lung function	Decreased lung function following exposure to burning leaves in asthmatics, but not in non-asthmatics	92
Adults with airways obstruction	Prevalence	Symptoms	42 per cent of population reported increased or worsened symptoms during episode of exposure to agricultural burning emissions. 20 per cent reported breathing trouble	93
All ages	Longitudinal	Emergency room visits	Increased asthma visits with PM ₁₀ during episode of exposure to biomass burning emissions in Singapore	94
All ages	Longitudinal	Emergency room visits	No increase in asthma visits with PM ₁₀ during episode of exposure to bushfire emissions in Australia	95
All ages	Longitudinal	Emergency room visits	No increase in asthma visits with PM ₁₀ during episode of exposure to bushfire emissions in Australia	96

Table 7
Estimated Percentage of Particle Removal for Portable Units by CADR and by Room Size

		Percentage of Particles Removed					
Room Size	CADR	Smoke (20 min.)		Dust (20 min.)		Pollen (10 min.)	
		AC	T	AC	T	AC	T
5 x 6	10	49%	68%	49%	70%	-	-
	40	89%	97%	88%	98%	57%	93%
	80	95%	100%	95%	100%	75%	99%
9 x 12	40	53%	71%	52%	72%	24%	78%
	80	76%	89%	75%	89%	40%	86%
	150	89%	98%	89%	98%	58%	94%
12 x 18	80	53%	71%	52%	72%	24%	78%
	150	74%	87%	73%	88%	38%	85%
	300	89%	97%	-	-	-	-
	350	-	-	91%	99%	-	-
	450	-	-	-	-	69%	97%
18 x 24	150	51%	70%	50%	71%	23%	78%
	300	73%	87%	-	-	-	-
	350	-	-	77%	91%	-	-
	450	-	-	-	-	50%	91%
20 x 30	300	63%	79%	-	-	-	-
	350	-	-	67%	84%	-	-
	450	-	-	-	-	40%	86%

AC=Removal by the air-cleaning device
T= Removal by the air-cleaning device plus natural settling
Note: Estimates ignore the effect of incoming air. For smoke and, to a lesser extent, dust, the more drafty the room, the smaller the CADR required. For pollen, which enters from outdoors, a higher CADR is needed in a drafty room.
Source: Reference 26.

Figure 1
Adverse health effects associated with air pollution. The size of each level of the pyramid represents the proportion of the population affected.

