

Study: Snow soaks up toxic air pollutants

By Jacqueline Howard, *Huffington Post*

A team of scientists recently revealed that snow in urban areas can absorb the same toxic and carcinogenic pollutants that come from car exhaust. The interaction of pollutants with cold elements and freezing temperatures in snow might even cause the release of new compounds, according to Parisa Ariya, professor of chemistry and atmospheric sciences at McGill University in Canada, who led the research.

“Snow flakes are ice particles with various types of surfaces, including several active sites, that can absorb various gaseous or particulate pollutants,” she told the *Huffington Post*. “As a mother who is an atmospheric physical chemist, I definitely do not suggest my young kids to eat snow in urban areas in general.”

The researchers analyzed how snow interacts with exhaust-derived particles and pollutants by putting both snow and exhaust fumes in a chamber. After examining the chemical reactions that took place, the researchers discovered that snow was efficient at removing pollutant particles from the air.

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