Air pollution I

Today's lecture

- Units for air pollutants
- Air pollution problems
- Air pollutants
- Indoor air pollution
- Acid rain

Today's goal


오 존 (O3)
0.002 ppm
환경기준 0.1/시간


미세먼지(PM-10)
현 재 455
전 일 112
150/ 일
newstown.co.kr


아황산가스(SO2)
0.001 ppm
환경기준: 0.15
측정장소: 여도동
깨끗한 한시
건강한 미래 아름다운환경


중 구
초미세먼지 (PM2.5)
3 μg/m³(기준 50 이하)
서울특별시


이산화질소 0.029 ppm
환경기준 0.100ppm
외출 등 실외활동 지장없음
서울특별시

Units of measurement

- volume/volume units (for gas phase pollutants)
  - ppm = parts per million
  - ppb = parts per billion
  - ppt = parts per trillion
- mass/volume (for gas & particle phase pollutants)
  - usually $\mu g/m^3$

Unit conversion

Consider a pollutant "*i*"

Ideal gas law: $PV = nRT$

$$\frac{n_i}{V_i} = \frac{moles\ of\ pollutant\ i}{volume\ of\ pollutant\ i} = \frac{P}{RT}$$

$$ppm_i = \frac{moles\ of\ pollutant\ i}{moles\ of\ air} \times 10^6 = \frac{n_i}{n_{air}} \times 10^6$$

So, $$\frac{\mu g_i}{m^3{}_{air}} = ppm_i \times MW_i \times \frac{P}{RT}$$

R = ideal gas constant = 8.21 x 10^{-5} m^3-atm/K-mole

Unit conversion

Q: Convert 10 ppb of SO_2 to μg/m^3 at 20°C, 1 atm.

Air pollution problems

- Classification of air pollution problems
  - **Microscale**: less than the size of a house or slightly bigger
  - **Mesoscale**: a few hectares to the size of a city or slightly bigger
  - **Macroscale**: size of a county to a country and to the globe

Air pollution problems

- Microscale air pollution problems
  - Indoor air pollution: pollutants from burners, ovens, heaters, cigarette smoke, and underground
  - Cigarette smoke on streets

http://www.compacappliance.net

http://www.odamindia.org

http://www.edaily.co.kr

Air pollution problems

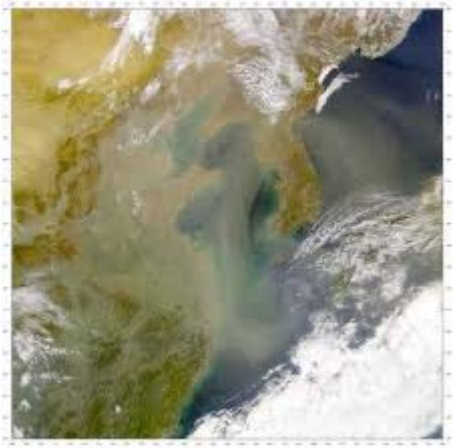
- Mesoscale air pollution problems
  - Vehicle exhaust
  - Smoke from power plants, factories, etc.
  - Smog

http://web.ornl.gov

http://www.bbc.com

Air pollution problems

- Macroscale air pollution problems
  - Acid rain
  - Yellow dust
  - Ozone depletion
  - Global warming



http://en.wikipedia.com

http://breitbart.com

Air pollutants

- Carbon monoxide (CO)
  - Generated by incomplete combustion of carbon
  - Natural sources: oxidation of methane (CH_4) in the atmosphere
  - Anthropogenic sources: motor vehicles, fossil fuel burning, solid waste disposal, burning of plant materials
  - Carbon monoxide poisoning: lots of deaths in 1950s-1980s in Korea caused by indoor briquette burning

Air pollutants

- Lead
  - Natural sources: volcanic activity and airborne soil
  - Anthropogenic sources: smelters and refining processes, and incineration of lead-containing wastes
  - In the past, lead used to be added to gasoline → significant air pollution problems → lead addition currently prohibited

Air pollutants

- Nitrogen oxides
  - NO, NO_2, N_2O, NO_3, N_2O_3, N_2O_4, N_2O_5
  - NO and NO_2 are involved in the formation of photochemical smog and acid rain
  - $NO_x = NO + NO_2$
  - Anthropogenic sources: combustion processes in motor vehicles, power plants, and the industry
  - N_2 is an inert gas, but reacts with oxygen at high temperature (>1600 K):

$$N_2 + O_2 \rightarrow 2NO$$

Air pollutants

- Photochemical oxidants
  - Chemicals produced by reaction in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight
  - Classified as secondary pollutants
  - Toxic effects because of their oxidizing ability: cause eye, nose, and throat irritation, and affect lung function
  - Major pollutants in photochemical smog
  - Most important photochemical oxidant: ozone

Air pollutants

- Sulfur oxides
  - SO_2, SO_3, SO_4^{2-}
  - Called SO_x
  - Sources
    - Direct emission of SO_x from power plants, industry, volcanoes, and the oceans
    - Oxidation of H_2S produced by natural biological processes or the industry
  - Involved in “London smog” and acid rain

Air pollutants

- Particulates
  - Particles suspended in the air
  - Natural sources: sea salt, soil dust, volcanic particles, smoke from forest fires
  - Anthropogenic sources: fossil fuel burning, industrial processes
  - Damage respiratory organs

Air pollutants

- Particulates
  - Large particles are trapped at the upper respiratory system, but small particles go deeper → small particles are more significant!
  - Korean government regulate "PM_{10}" and "$PM_{2.5}$"
    - PM_{10}: particulate matter less than 10 μm size
    - $PM_{2.5}$: particulate matter less than 2.5 μm size

Air pollutants

- Other hazardous air pollutants
  - Toxic organic compounds, heavy metals, arsenic, etc.
  - Korean government regulates 35 hazardous air pollutants
  - Some examples: cadmium, mercury, asbestos, dioxin, benzene

Indoor air pollution

- Difficult to regulate!
- CO and NO_x from gas ranges, ovens, heaters, and cigarette smoke
- Cigarette smoke also contains toxic compounds including carcinogens
- Bioaerosols: bacteria, viruses, fungi, mites, and pollen
- Radon: emitted from the ground (high in basements)
- Volatile organic compounds
  - ex) formaldehyde: emitted from building materials ("sick building syndrome")
- Heavy metals: emitted from paints

Acid rain

- SO_2 and NO_x in the air undergo series of reactions to form sulfuric acid (H_2SO_4) and nitric acid (HNO_3)
- pH in natural rain has a pH near 5.6 (why?)
- Rain pH in polluted areas can go below 5, sometimes even close to 2
- Effects: acidification of rivers and lakes (fish deaths), nutrient leaching from soil (plant deaths)

Reading assignment

Textbook Ch 12 p. 587-605