



Rajan Chakrabarty, associate professor and lead author of the study said: 'Annual mean PM2.5 national standards are set at or below 12 micrograms per cubic meter, below that you are supposed to be safe.

'But in fact, we saw a rapid increase in R rate when PM2.5 exposure levels were below 6 micrograms per cubic meter.

'Although decades of strict air quality regulations in the U.S. have resulted in significant reductions of nitrogen dioxide levels, the recent reversal of environmental regulations which weaken limits on gaseous emissions from power plants and vehicles threaten the country's future air quality scenario.

'Instead of working to resolve this issue, these reversals may be setting us up for another pandemic.'

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Courtesy Air Quality 18 Nov 2020



Light Rail (UK)

Auchenshuggle Junction, 8 Beechmore,
Moore, Warrington, Cheshire,
England, United Kingdom.
WA4 6UE

Tel (+44) (0)1925 740060 (0) 07721378223
www.applrguk.co.uk email JimH@jimmyharkins.com



Air pollution may be partly responsible for spread of Covid-19, new study

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Air pollution may be partially responsible for the rapid spread of Covid-19 in the U.S, according to researchers at Washington University.

When it comes to how ill someone gets after contracting Covid-19, medical professionals believe that a person's health can play a vital role.

When it comes to how fast the virus can spread through a community, the health of the environment is directly correlated with the reproduction (R) rate of the virus – this denotes the expected number of people each ill person can infect.

In order to understand this link, the researchers looked at where the R rate was greater than one. In those places, they looked at different factors, including pollution estimates.

This research revealed that an increase a 0.25 increase in R rate corresponded with a 10% increase in sulphate, nitrogen dioxide and ammonium pollution and an increase of 1 µg/m³ in PM_{2.5}.

The researchers have hypothesised this initial increase in the R rate is a result of initial changes in condition; when the air is free of PM_{2.5}, an individual is unaffected.

The initial exposure is the catalyst for change in lung health resulting in a change from non-susceptibility to susceptibility, which is reflected in the increasing R rate.