



Image credit: NASA

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Big City Pollution: The Corona Connection

Life in the modern city can be grand. Imagine waking up in a place where you are surrounded by an embarrassment of cultural richness and diversity, where everything you could possibly need or want, including the best thin crust pizza you ever had, is just a pleasant stroll away.

As this May 5, 2014 image of New York City's island of Manhattan reveals, a whole lot of people agree. The problem is that all of that richness and convenience comes at a cost, or perhaps better stated, an interconnected system of costs.

No one would be surprised to learn that New York City has a pollution problem. The energy required to supply, transport, build, heat, cool, feed, and entertain a city of over 8 million people is understandably high. Unfortunately, all of this fossil fuel burning releases tons of fine particulates into the atmosphere, which are then breathed deep into the lungs of residents.

The inhalation of fine particulates is known to cause chronic respiratory problems in people of all ages. Asthma is all too common in younger city dwellers, and lung disease in its many forms effects many adults. Also known – chronic respiratory issues are high among the pre-existing medical issues that compromise our body's natural ability to fight off the COVID-19 virus. The bottom line is that air pollution increases everyone's vulnerability to diseases like the Coronavirus.

All large cities have pollution problems, some more than others. If you were Mayor of the biggest city near you, what would you do to address the problem so that all residents could live safe and healthy lives?



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