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From: Princeton University via EurekAlert!
Published June 27, 2016 03:40 PM

Household fuels exceed power plants and cars as source of smog in Beijing

Beijing and surrounding areas of China often suffer from choking smog. The Chinese government has made commitments to improving air quality and has achieved notable results in reducing emissions from the power and transportation sectors. However, new research indicates that the government could achieve dramatic air quality improvements with more attention on an overlooked source of outdoor pollution -- residential cooking and heating.

"Coal and other dirty solid fuels are frequently used in homes for cooking and heating," said Denise Mauzerall, a professor of civil and environmental engineering and public and international affairs at Princeton University. "Because these emissions are essentially uncontrolled they emit a disproportionately large amount of air pollutants which contribute substantially to smog in Beijing and surrounding regions."

Households account for about 18 percent of total energy use in the Beijing region but produce 50 percent of black carbon emissions and 69 percent of organic carbon emissions, according to a research team from institutions including Princeton, the University of California Berkeley, Peking University and Tsinghua University. In the Beijing area, households contribute more pollutants in the form of small soot particles (which are particularly hazardous to human health) than the transportation sector and power plants combined; in the winter heating season, households also contribute more small particles than do industrial sources.

The researchers said the high levels of air pollutant emissions are due to the use of coal and other dirty fuels in small stoves and heaters that lack the pollution controls in place in power plants, vehicles and at some factories.

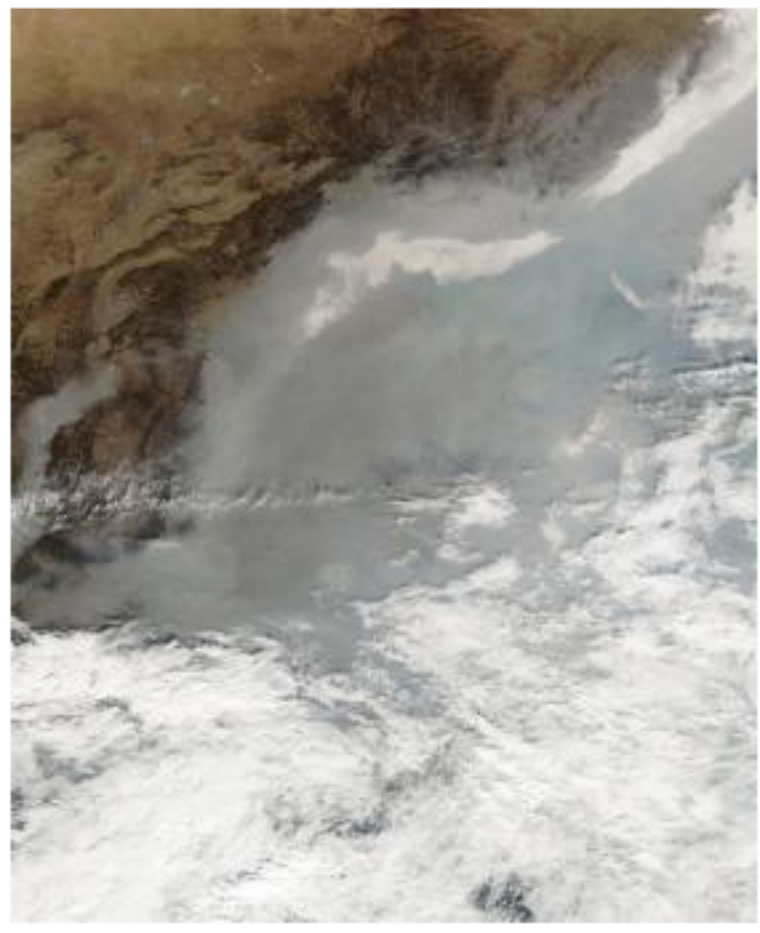
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Satellite Image: Smog over Beijing via [NASA](#)

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