



Gradient Scientist Provides Testimony Before House Subcommittee on EPA Projections of Decreased Mortality Attributed to Particulate Matter (PM) Reductions in Outdoor Air

September 13, 2011, Cambridge, MA. [Gradient](#) Principal [Peter Valberg](#) was invited by the House Energy and Commerce, Subcommittee on Energy and Power, as an expert in health risk assessment and inhalation toxicology to provide scientific testimony regarding proposed bills on the 'EPA Regulatory Relief Act of 2011' and the 'Cement Sector Regulatory Relief Act of 2011.' The hearing was held September 8, 2011, at the Rayburn Office Building in Washington, DC.

The US EPA relied on statistical associations to estimate mortality reductions that would result from reducing levels of particulate matter (PM) in our outdoor [ambient] air. Dr. Valberg emphasized several key reasons US EPA's mortality estimates are not reliably supported by the weight of the scientific evidence, including:

- Dose-response data from laboratory studies of animal and human exposures to PM are not supportive of mortality effects at current outdoor PM levels;
- Most of our PM exposure is from indoor / personal / work environments, and not from outdoor air; and, no mortality is evident from these higher PM exposures; and
- Statistical correlations *per se* cannot establish a causal link between outdoor PM levels measured at central monitors and increased population mortality.

Taken together, Dr. Valberg emphasized that evidence from experimental science raises major questions about EPA's calculations of "lives saved" from small reductions in outdoor PM levels. He indicated that we are exposed to much higher levels of PM in our everyday lives (*e.g.*, from driving in cars, mowing our lawn, grilling, or cleaning our attic) than the ambient PM levels projected by US EPA to result in tens of thousands of deaths per year.

Dr. Valberg is an expert in human health risk assessment and inhalation toxicology. He has 30 years of experience teaching at the Harvard School of Public Health and consulting at Gradient. He has provided air quality expertise to industrial clients, the Department of Justice, the US EPA, and the National Academy of Sciences. He has authored more than 100 scientific articles. His risk assessment expertise covers air pollutants, chemical exposures, radionuclides, and electromagnetic fields (including EMF from power lines, radio waves, and cellular telephones).

About Gradient

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