



# Lead from petrol is still poisoning London's air

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40% of the lead in London's air comes from leaded petrol that fuelled cars more than half a century ago. Tetraethyl lead was used as a fuel additive. This lead was emitted from cars' exhausts, causing atmospheric lead pollution. High lead levels can cause memory loss and a decrease in cognitive function.

Leaded petrol was banned in 1999. Lead emissions have dropped below the legal limit, but there's still more lead in the air than the natural background level. Lead emitted by cars in the 1960s and 70s has stuck around in road dust. Scientists can tell this lead came from petrol, because the lead used in tetraethyl lead has a different composition of lead isotopes to that from coal.



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1. Explain why leaded petrol was banned in many countries.
2. What is the name for particles the size of dust in the atmosphere?
3. Explain why the different isotopes of lead have the same chemical properties.