

Beijingers react to smog: 'This is life' and 'like a dream'

December 8 2015



A woman uses a scarf and others wear masks to cover their face from pollutants as they walk along a street on a polluted day in Beijing, Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2015. Schools closed and rush-hour roads were much quieter than normal as Beijing's first-ever red alert for smog took effect Tuesday, closing many factories and invoking restrictions to keep half the city's vehicles off the roads. (AP Photo/Andy Wong)

Beijing issued a red alert this week for smog, triggering restrictions on

traffic, school closures and factory suspensions. City residents reacted with a mix of alarm and nonchalance:

"This is modern life for Beijing people. We wanted to develop, and now we pay the price," Beijing office worker Cao Yong said during a break from work.

"You have to do whatever you can to protect yourself," Beijing resident Li Huiwen said while stopping at a market. "Even when wearing the mask, I feel uncomfortable and don't have any energy."

A man who gave only his surname, Du, said the haze was good for taking photographs of old buildings and that he was taking advantage of a lack of crowds near Beijing's ancient Forbidden City. "I like this kind of haziness. It gives a blurry feeling and makes you feel like you're in a dream."

"You live in Beijing, you just get used to it. Every winter is like this," said a store clerk who gave only her surname, Sun, and who said the restrictions were a nuisance. "But now that they're canceling school, it becomes really inconvenient. If you don't get time off from work, who watches the kid?"

"I would keep myself indoors, and wear a mask all the time if I'm outside on smoggy days. And air purifiers at home are a must," Beijing

resident Sun Yuanyuan said.



Commuters wear masks to protect themselves from pollutants as they walk out from a subway station on a polluted day in Beijing, Tuesday, Dec. 8, 2015. Schools closed and rush-hour roads were much quieter than normal as Beijing's first-ever red alert for smog took effect Tuesday, closing many factories and invoking restrictions to keep half the city's vehicles off the roads. (AP Photo/Andy Wong)

© 2015 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Beijingers react to smog: 'This is life' and 'like a dream' (2015, December 8) retrieved 20 September 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2015-12-beijingers-react-smog-life.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.