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METHODS OF MEASUREMENTS OF SPECIFIC POLLUTANTS

IN AMBIENT AIR

O U T L I N E

by

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There are many excellent texts describing methods for measuring the comparatively low concentration of different substances found in air and WHO is preparing critical monographs in which standard methods will be recommended and described in detail. In these texts the difficulties encountered by the presence of interfering substances will be discussed.

Methods of measurement used must be selected according to the information required. The measurements of dust-fall may be admirably suited to the monitoring of precipitating equipment on an industrious stack but useless for purposes of medical research. Again, samples of smoke and SO₂ taken over periods of 24 hours may be of great value for epidemiological studies but since the substances measured are but indicators of pollution which is of great physical and chemical complexity, the measurements obtained can mislead by giving an over-simplified picture of the state of the air.

For the purposes of medical research more complex methods are required and sampling techniques and methods of examination of the samples must be chosen with care and their limitation realized. These topics will be discussed.

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