**China's coronavirus lockdown curbs deadly pollution, likely saving the lives of tens of thousands, says researcher**

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(CNN)The drastic measures enforced by China during the coronavirus outbreak have slashed deadly air pollution, potentially saving the lives of tens of thousands of people, a Stanford University ***researcher*** (person who works to find information) said.

There's an unlikely ***beneficiary*** (recipient/ receiver) of coronavirus: The planet. "The reductions in air pollution in China caused by this economic disruption likely saved twenty times more lives in China than have currently been lost due to infection with the virus in that country," Burke wrote on G-Feed.

The link between air pollution and ***premature*** (too early) deaths has been well ***established*** (well known). A 30-year ***analysis*** (investigation) of 652 cities in 24 countries and regions across six continents found that increases in air pollution were linked to increases in related deaths: The higher the levels of pollution, the faster people die.

The World Health Organization has estimated that around 7 million people die every year from ***exposure*** (contact) to fine particles in polluted air.

According to China's Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the average number of "good quality air days" increased 21.5% in February, compared to the same period last year in Hubei ***province***(area), the epicenter of the global coronavirus ***pandemic*** (widespread disease).

Satellite images released by NASA and the European Space Agency also show a dramatic ***reduction*** (decrease) in nitrogen dioxide emissions (things sent out or given off) -- those released by vehicles, power plants and industrial facilities -- in major Chinese cities between January and February.

NASA and European Space Agency (ESA) pollution monitoring satellites have detected significant decreases in nitrogen dioxide (NO2) over China. There is evidence that the change is at least partly related to the economic slowdown following the outbreak of coronavirus.

Burke was also able to tap into existing data showing the health benefits that cleaner air in China can have -- from the 2008 Beijing Olympics when Chinese ***authorities*** (people in charge) ***imposed*** (forced by law) strict pollution controls**.** At that time NASA also observed a significant reduction in pollution levels.

Even short-term exposure to low levels of air pollution can decrease risk of cardiac arrest. Scientists analyzed the impact of these measures and found they dramatically reduced the number of premature deaths among children under five and adults over 70. …Burke calculated that the two months of cleaner air resulting from the coronavirus restrictions has saved the lives of between 1,400 and 4,000 children under 5, and 51,700 to 73,000 adults over 70 in China.

He said that while the cleaner air had likely saved lives, the broader disruption caused by Covid-19 could cause many additional deaths not directly ***attributable*** to (caused by) being infected with the virus -- for example because of declines in economic well-beingor the difficulty in ***accessing***(getting to) health services during the epidemic.

"Does this mean pandemics are good for health? No," he said. "Instead it means that the way our economies (buying goods, selling goods, making money cause cash rules!) operate absent pandemics has massive hidden health costs, and it takes a pandemic to help see that."