



Global Atmospheric Change and Public Health

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The world is just beginning to face up to the problems which will be brought about by global climate change. Most people equate climate change with rising temperatures, disturbed weather patterns, agricultural crises, and sea level rises; yet potential health effects may be the most significant factors in the whole developing picture. Man's effect on climate accelerates as population increases. Population increases strain infrastructures and strained infrastructures lead to stresses on society. We already are experiencing higher ultraviolet B radiation through our depleted ozone layer and can expect more cancers, more cataracts, and diminishing immunity. Expected changing weather and storm patterns may result in disturbed and diminished agricultural production with malnutrition and famine on a grandiose scale; diseases would migrate and the number of displaced persons would increase greatly. This book consists of papers presented at a meeting on Global Atmospheric Change and Public Health, held in Washington, D.C., in December 1989. It was sponsored by the Air Resources Information Clearinghouse (ARIC), a project of the Center for En vironmental Information, Inc. (CEI), a nonprofit organization in Rochester, New York, and co-sponsored by thirty-two U.S., Canadian and international organizations and agencies. The conference was the first to bring together in a public forum the health, scien tific, policy and information communities to address the issues. The book examines potential public health and health-related impacts on society, communicable diseases, cancer and cataract, immunity, heat effects, respiratory problems and human nutrition.

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