

Canadian Press

University study claims pollution killing 25,000 Canadians a year

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By The Canadian Press

VANCOUVER - A University of B.C. study claims pollution is killing 25,000 Canadians a year and costing the health care system more than \$9 billion.

Study co-author David Boyd says Canadians are awash in toxic chemicals such as pesticides, heavy metals, flame retardants and air pollution.

The study, published this week in the on-line journal Environmental Research, says in addition to the deaths, the pollution causes 24,000 new cases of cancer and 2,500 low birthweight babies in Canada each year.

The research focused on four health areas: respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, cancer and congenital problems.

Boyd, who co-wrote the paper with Dr. Stephen Genuis of the University of Alberta, says Canadians think of their country as pristine, but the record shows when faced with a choice between protecting the environment or polluting industries, we protect industries.

He says Canada should develop a national environmental strategy, including tougher standards for air and water quality, food and consumer products.