

## Sulfur dioxide from the Montenegrin coal-fired thermal power plant in Pljevlja is suffocating the residents

In the previous days, high concentrations of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) in the air were registered in Pljevlja, despite the fact that many households have not yet started to burn intensively due to relatively high outdoor temperatures for this time of year.

Gordana Djukanović, Air Quality Advisor at the Agency for Nature and Environmental Protection, said in a statement for RTV Pljevlja that the main cause of excessive sulfur dioxide emissions in the air in recent days is the thermal power plant in Pljevlja – a thermal power plant that causes over 98 percent of all sulfur emissions. – dioxide in Montenegro, because it burns large amounts of coal.

“Increased concentrations of sulfur dioxide in Pljevlja are directly related to coal combustion. In different circumstances, we can mostly connect that to the thermal power plant, and we can also connect them to the show from individual and collective furnaces,” said Djukanovic.

She pointed out that exceedances of sulfur dioxide are only registered in Pljevlja.

“It is something that is indicative and related not only to the direct impact of sulfur dioxide as a pollutant, but also to the effects it causes because it can be a precursor to the creation or exceeding of PM<sub>10</sub> particles. We are following what is happening,” said Djukanovic.

The highest concentrations of sulfur dioxide were measured on October 24 at 5 pm, when the concentration of this gas was 632.7 micrograms per cubic meter. High concentrations of sulfur dioxide were registered an hour later at 568.1 micrograms per metro cubic meter.

The allowed daily concentration of sulfur dioxide in Montenegro is 125 micrograms per cubic meter, and the hourly 350. Yesterday at 3 pm, the concentrations of sulfur dioxide in the air were measured at 231.4 micrograms per cubic meter.

That these are large concentrations is also shown by the fact that today at the same time in Nikšić the concentration of sulfur dioxide was two milligrams per cubic meter, ie 115 times lower than in the northernmost Montenegrin city.

Sulfur dioxide is one of the most common air pollutants, which is irritating to the eyes, mucous membranes and respiratory tract. Higher humidity increases the risk of sulfuric acid formation. Sulfur dioxide also causes acid rain.

The recommendations of the Institute of Public Health are that in case of very high air pollution, people with heart and lung diseases, the elderly and children should avoid any outdoor activity. The rest of the population should avoid prolonged and strenuous physical activity.

In July this year, Elektroprivreda Crne Gore (EPCG) signed a contract on the eco reconstruction of the first block of the Pljevlja Thermal Power Plant, worth more than 54 million euros.

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Eco reconstruction includes the construction of a desulphurization system, after which the emission of sulfur dioxide currently emitted from the chimney of TPP Pljevlja would be significantly reduced. Eco reconstruction is planned to be performed in the period from 2020 to 2023.

Source: vijesti.me