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## EARTH: Still in a Haze: Black Carbon

Alexandria, VA – Black carbon — fine particles of soot in the atmosphere produced from the burning of fossil fuels or biomass — a major contributor to the thick hazes of pollution hovering over cities around the world, has been known to be a health hazard for decades. But over the last decade, scientists have been examining in increasing detail the various ways in which these particles contribute to another hazard: heating up the planet.

Black carbon's impact on climate is not cut-and-dried, however, as EARTH explores in "Still in a Haze: What We Don't Know About Black Carbon" in the April issue. Does black carbon decrease the albedo in snow-covered areas, thus warming the planet? Or does it increase cloud cover, thus cooling the planet?

Learn more about black carbon's mysterious effects on climate, and read other stories on topics such as how microbes survive for tens of thousands of years in salt crystals, how Earth is becoming dustier, and whether invasive species have caused mass extinctions in the past in the April issue of EARTH. Plus, don't miss the surprising story about discovering dinosaur tracks in a New Jersey housing development.

These stories and many more can be found in the April issue of EARTH, now available digitally (<http://www.earthmagazine.org/digital/>) or in print on your local newsstands.

For further information on the April featured article, go to <http://www.earthmagazine.org/earth/article/428-7db-3-e>.

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