

# Particle Pollution

## What are particles? Where do they come from?

Particles in the air are a mixture of solids and liquid droplets that vary in size and are often referred to as "particulate matter."

Very small particles with diameters less than 2.5 micrometers are called "fine particles." They are produced any time fuels such as coal, oil, diesel or wood are burned. Fine particles come from fuel used in everything from power plants to wood stoves and cars.

"Coarse" dust particles range in size from 2.5 to 10 micrometers in diameter. Particles of this size are produced during crushing or grinding and from vehicles traveling on paved or unpaved roads.

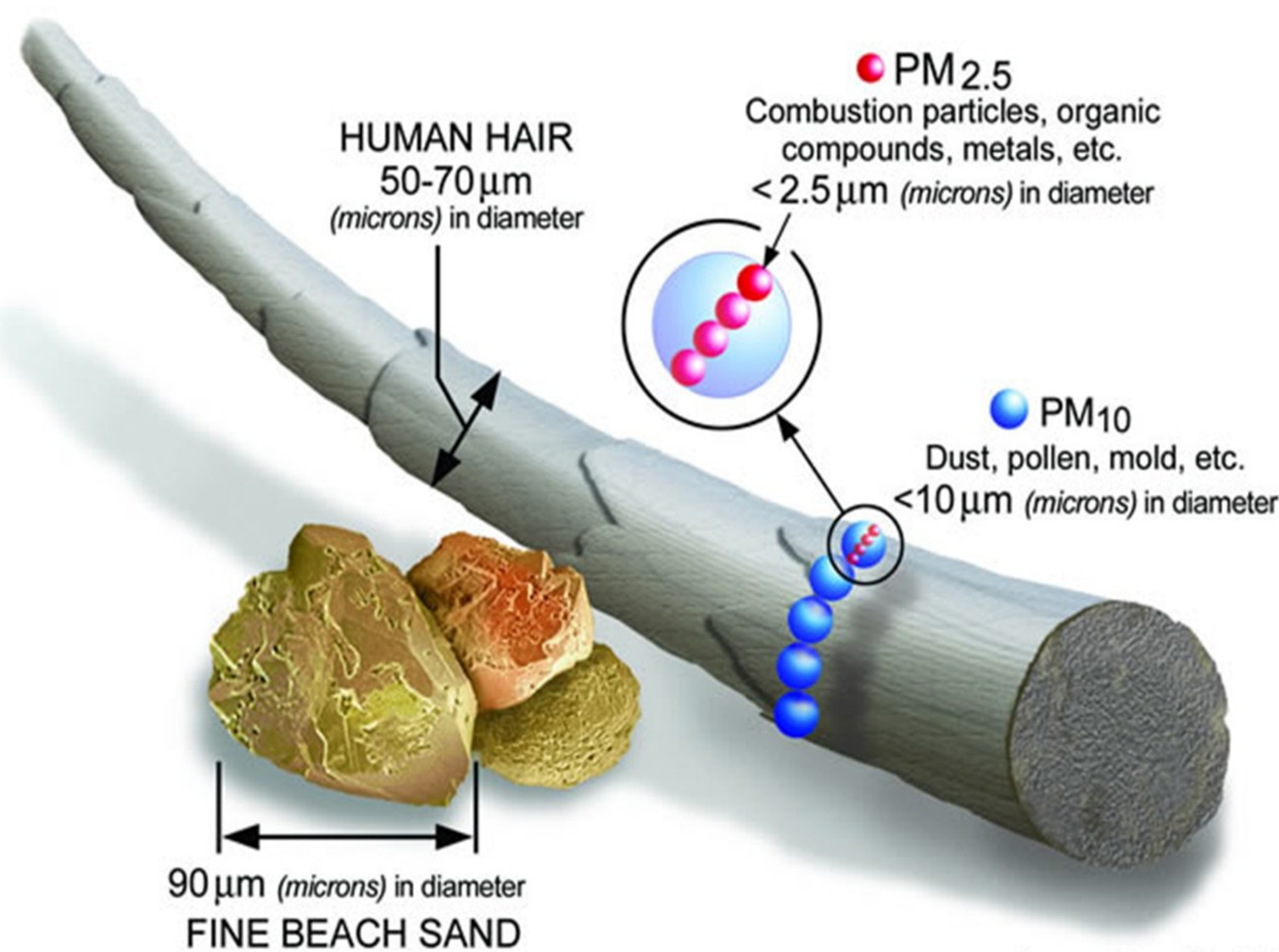


Image courtesy of the U.S. EPA

## How can particle pollution affect you?

Fine and coarse particles can cause a variety of serious health problems. When exposed to these particles, people with heart or lung diseases and older adults are more at risk of hospital and emergency room visits.

- **Particles can aggravate heart diseases** such as congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease.
- **Particles can aggravate lung diseases** such as asthma and bronchitis, causing increased medication use and doctor visits.

