Vocabulary/Ch. 15

Friedland

**air pollution**: The introduction of chemicals, particulate matter, or microorganisms into the atmosphere at concentrations high enough to harm plants, animals, and materials such as buildings, or to alter ecosystems.

**particulate matter** (PM): Solid or liquid particles suspended in air; also known as **particles** and **particulates**

**haze**: Reduced visibility

**photochemical oxidants**: A class of air pollutants formed as a result of sunlight acting on compounds such as nitrogen oxides

**smog**: A word derived by combining the words smoke and fog

**photochemical smog**: Dominated by oxidants such as ozone, sometimes called **Los Angeles-type smog or brown smog.**

**London-type smog (gray smog)**: Is dominated by sulfur dioxide and sulfate compounds

**volatile organic compounds (VOCs)**: Organic compounds that evaporate at typical atmospheric temperatures

**primary pollutants**: A polluting compound that comes directly out of the smokestack, exhaust pipe, or natural emission source

**secondary pollutants**: A primary pollutant that has undergone transformation in the presence of sunlight, water, oxygen, or other compounds

**thermal inversion**: A situation in which a relatively warm layer of air at mid-altitude covers a layer of cold, dense air below

**inversion layer**: The layer of warm area that traps emissions in a thermal inversion

**chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs)**: A family of organic compounds whose properties make them ideal for use in refrigeration and air conditioning

**asbestos**: A long, think, fibrous silicate mineral with insulating properties, which can cause cancer when inhaled

**sick building syndrome**: A buildup of toxic compounds and pollutants in an airtight space; seen in newer buildings with good insulation and tight seals against air leaks