

VareseNews

Pollution, the worst day in the last 10 years

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One of the worst days of pollution in the last 10 years. It is possibly the cold and the absence of wind that have kept the fine particles (PM10) in the air, and according to the data collected on Thursday, January 18, by ARPA Lombardia's detection centres around the region, the result is quite dramatic. In Varese Province, the town of Saronno, where the level of alarm is 50 micrograms per cubic metre, once again saw the worst pollution, with 224 µg/m³. Then there was the centre in Ferno, with a little over 200 µg/m³. Even in Busto Arsizio, the level was 183 µg/m³, and Gallarate was a little better, with 177 µg/m³. In Varese, the level was stationary, so to speak, with 136 µg/m³.

In Milan, the Verziere centre recorded 163 µg/m³ for fine particles, more than three times the maximum level permitted. The situation is especially serious in the towns, in Milan Province, that lie on main roads. This is true of the "Varesina", where 222 µg/m³ was measured in Arese, and of the Milan-Meda highway, where the highest level was measured in Meda, over 25 km from the centre of Milan, of 255 µg/m³, more than five times the maximum permitted.

"In order to understand how serious the situation is in the metropolitan area, you need only consider the fact that, on only two occasions in the last ten years, on 18 January 2002, and 20 January 2006, were higher values than those detected in Meda yesterday ever measured," said the environmental league, Legambiente Lombardia. "And no improvement in the weather has been forecast, at least for today, although, a bit of wind at the weekend should ease the situation."

"Unfortunately, we are again facing a critical health emergency, which confirms, as if it were necessary, that not only Milan, but the whole of Lombardy is seriously affected by traffic and smog," claimed Damiano Di Simine, president of Legambiente Lombardia. "And yet, as far as we know, apart from Milan, the towns and provinces haven't made any arrangements to control the traffic, the temperatures of buildings, and the running of heating systems. If not now, when?" It should also be said, however, that, like Milan, Saronno has implemented a series of anti-pollution measures, such as orders concerning shops and heating, and produced a handbook for the people.

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