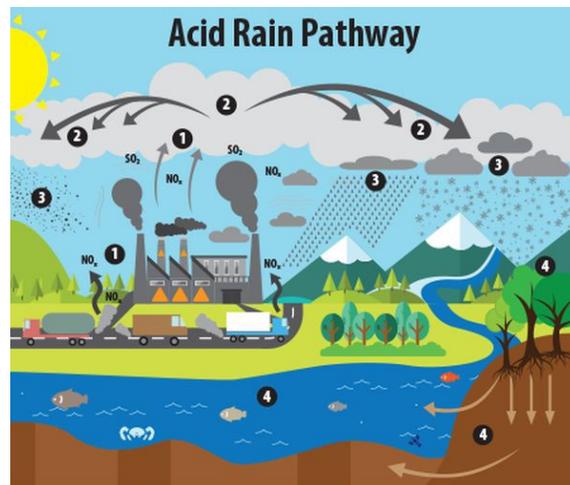


What Is Acid Rain?

by The Environmental Protection Agency

This text is taken from the United States Environmental Protection Agency's website.

Acid rain is rain that has been made acidic by certain pollutants in the air. Acid rain is a type of acid deposition, which can appear in many forms. Wet deposition is rain, sleet, snow, or fog that has become more acidic than normal. Dry deposition is another form of acid deposition, and this is when gases and dust particles become acidic. Both wet and dry deposition can be carried by the wind, sometimes for very long distances. Acid deposition in wet and dry forms falls on buildings, cars, and trees and can make lakes acidic. Acid deposition in dry form can be inhaled by people and can cause health problems in some people.

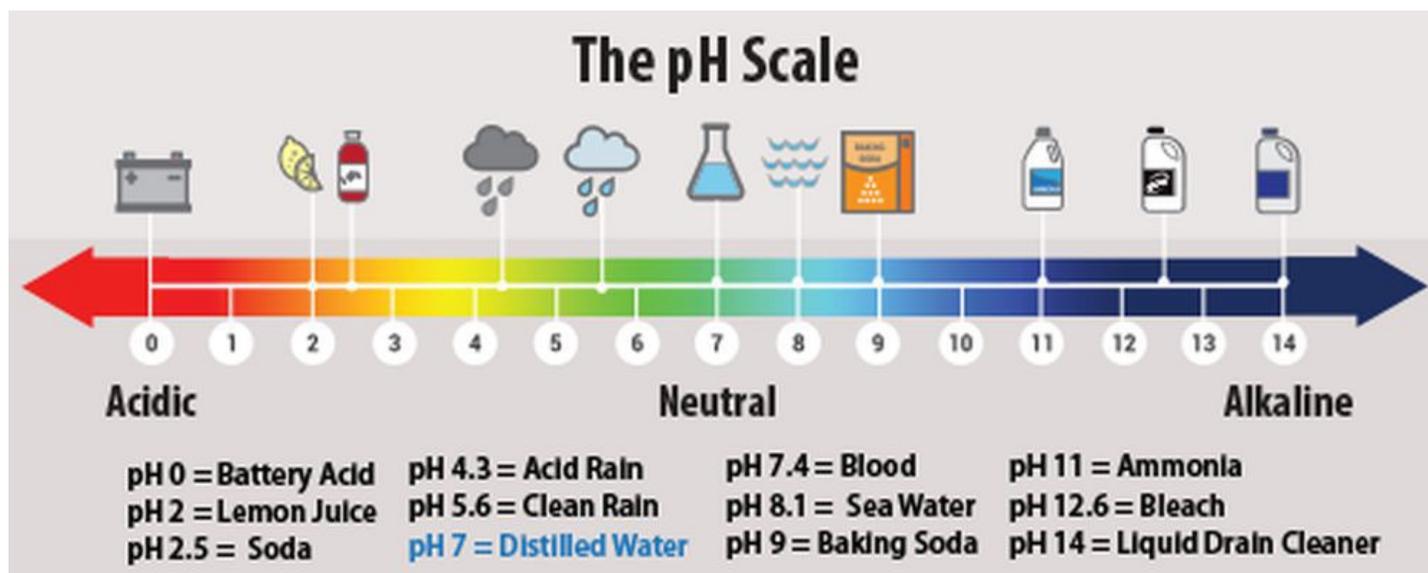


This image illustrates the pathway for acid rain in our environment: (1) Emissions of SO₂ and NO_x are released into the air, where (2) the pollutants are transformed into acid particles that may be transported long distances. (3) These acid particles then fall to the earth as wet and dry deposition (dust, rain, snow, etc.) and (4) may cause harmful effects on soil, forests, streams and lakes.

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What is acidity?

Acidic and basic are two ways that we describe chemical compounds. Acidity is measured using a pH scale. A pH scale runs from zero (the most acidic) to 14 (the most basic or alkaline). A substance that is neither basic [nor] acidic is called "neutral," and this has a pH of 7.



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