Special Issue

High Chromium Levels in Soils and Waters: Origin, Effects and Treatment

Message from the Guest Editors

Chromium (Cr) is a dangerous pollutant occurring into the environment due to anthropogenic activities and natural processes. Cr naturally occurs in several oxidation states, although only the Cr(III) and Cr(VI) species are stable at near-surface environment conditions. It is typically associated with ultramafic rocks and derived soils, because of the Cr(III)-bearing minerals that commonly constitute these lithotypes, such as spinels, pyroxenes, olivines, amphiboles, serpentine minerals, and others. However, due to weathering processes, Cr(III) is oxidizing into highly toxic Cr(VI) species and is widespread into the environment, reaching high levels into soil media and in natural waters used for agricultural and drinking purposes. However, chromium occurrence in the environment is also due to its common use in a large spectrum of industries, such as metallurgical and pigment industries, as well as ferrous and non-ferrous alloy metal fabrication, leather-tanning, and chrome-plating.

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Deadline for manuscript submissions

closed (30 November 2023)

International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health

an Open Access Journal by MDPI

CiteScore 8.5
Indexed in PubMed

mdpi.com/si/106898

International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health
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Addressing the environmental and public health challenges requires engagement and collaboration among clinicians and public health researchers. Scientific discoveries and advances in this research field play a critical role in providing a rational basis for informed decision-making toward control and prevention of human diseases, especially the illnesses that are induced from environmental exposure to health hazards.

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