

**According to the regulations, sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) in one measuring station can be exceeded only three days a year. This has not been respected in city of Bor for years. Analysis shows that with the privatization of RTB Bor (gold copper mine) at the end of 2018, pollution has increased in this city.**

The measuring station in Bor's city park, just five minutes from the entrance to the mining basin, records exceedances of sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) in the air for years. Thus, in 2014, the average pollution period was five months, to be reduced to 13 days by 2018, and then jumped to 40 days after the Chinese investment, according to the Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA).

Whether lasting 13 or 40 days, high concentrations of pollutants affect the health of Bor residents.

The findings of the Bor Institute for Mining and Metallurgy's report for 2018 show that in those years the concentrations of SO<sub>2</sub> and harmful PM<sub>10</sub> particles were higher than allowed, which could have contributed to blood and respiratory diseases. In 2018, arsenic in Bor was 24 times more than allowed. In many places, pollution in Serbia is above the legal limit.

About two-thirds of pre-school children and half of those under 18 in Bor, who in 2014-2018 needed the help of a doctor, had problems with their respiratory organs. They were most commonly affected by the sore throat and tonsils, which is the second most common disease in adults, with nine cases in every 100 inhabitants.

Although dominant, these diseases have a slight downward trend over the five-year period, coupled with declining production of the mining basin and a decrease in air pollution.

After the privatization of RTB Bor, pollution increased again.

Due to the release of hazardous substances into the air, the Ministry of Environmental Protection has initiated several lawsuits against Zijin Bor Copper.

Source: cins.rs