Bad Weather, Safe Day? The Effect of Weather/Pollution on Crime

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Camp Resources XXIII
Wrightsville Beach, NC
August 7-9, 2016
Motivation

- Extreme weather has become a prevailing topic due to the increase in greenhouse gases and air pollution.

- Air pollution can affect behavior; toxic plants openings and closings can be a very good proxy that affect people resort themselves into the neighborhood so that change the crime rates around the area.

- Few economic literature have done on pollution and crime rate.
Questions

1. How does weather affect crime rate in the cities of research? (Does crime rate react to a certain temperature range?)

2. How does pollution overall affect crime rate in the cities of research? (Does opening or closing a polluting site affect the crime rate?)
What do I find?

- The violent crime rate increases with temperature and PM2.5
- The property crime rate decreases with PM10
- Temperature only affects the violent crime rate, not property crimes
- The turn around point is 28°C, it is slightly higher than previous studies which used aggregate weather and crime data.
Data

- Crime data
- Weather data
- Pollution data
- Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) Closing and Open Data
- Census variables
Empirical methods

- \( Crime_{i,d,t} = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{temperature}_{i,d} + \alpha_2 PM2.5(\text{or PM10}_{i,d}) + \alpha_3 X_{i,t} + time_t + city_{it} + \epsilon_{i,d,t} \)

- \( Crime_{i,d,t} = \alpha_0 + \sum_{b=1}^{13} \alpha_b \text{tempbin}_{i,d} + \alpha_2 PM2.5(\text{or PM10}_{i,d}) + \alpha_3 X_{i,t} + time_t + city_{it} + \epsilon_{i,d,t} \)

- \( Crime_{i,j,t} = \gamma_0 + \gamma_1 [\text{Plant Operating}]_{i,t} + \gamma_2 1[<1 \text{ Mile}]_{i,j} + \gamma_3 1[\text{Plant Operating}]_{i,t} \times 1[<1 \text{ Mile}]_{i,j} + \eta_{i,t} + \tau_t + \gamma_4 X_{i,t} + \epsilon_{i,j,t} \)

* Project in progress, this method adopts the Currie et al (2015)’s empirical work.
Results

• The violent crime rate rises about 1% with a 1 µg/m³ PM2.5 increases, which is about 1,000 cases per day. However, PM2.5 does not show any influence on the property crime rate.

• There is a decrease of about 3% to 4% with a 1 µg/m³ PM10 increases, which equals about 3,000 to 4,000 cases per day.
Results

The Relationship between Crime and Temperature bins/Pollution

Violent Crime Rate

Property Crime Rate

Temperature Bins