Irving Langmuir Encyclopedia Article

Irving Langmuir

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Irving Langmuir

1881-1957

American chemical physicist who was awarded the 1932 Nobel Prize for Chemistry for work on surface chemistry. From studies of surface films on liquids Langmuir deduced approximate molecular sizes and shapes, and his studies of gas absorption at solid surfaces led to the Langmuir absorption isotherm. He also developed a shared-electron theory of chemical bonds. While at General Electric (1919-1950) Langmuir developed many devices, including an improved light bulb, enhanced vacuum pump, and hydrogen welding torch.