Nitrogen Oxides Encyclopedia Article

Nitrogen Oxides

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Nitrogen Oxides

Five oxides of **nitrogen** are known: N_2O, NO, N_2O_3, NO_2, and N_2O_5. Environmental scientists usually refer to only two of these, nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide, when they use the term nitrogen oxides. The term may also be used, however, for any other combination of the five compounds. Nitric oxide and nitrogen dioxide are produced during the **combustion** of **fossil fuels** in automobiles, jet aircraft, industrial processes, and electrical power production. The gases have a number of deleterious effects on human health, including irritation of the eyes, skin, respiratory tract, and lungs; chronic and acute **bronchitis**; and heart and lung damage.

See Also

Ozone; Smog